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9 YEARS  
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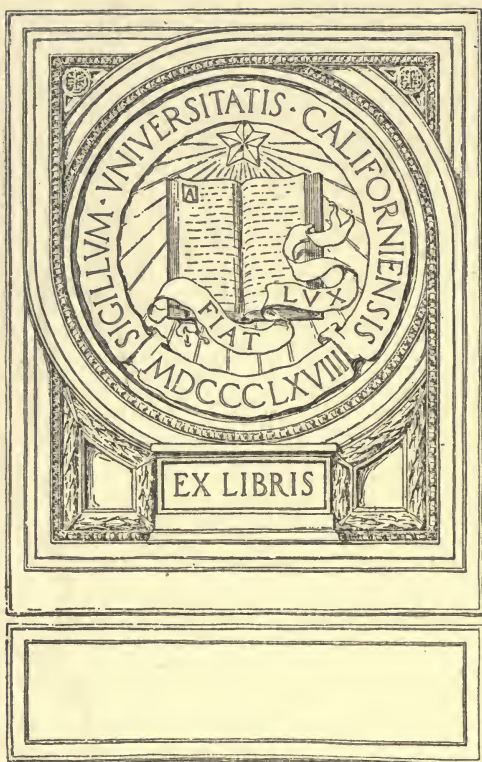
HISTORY OF  
**CORPORAL FESS WHITAKER**

Life in The Kentucky Mountains,  
Mexico and Texas

8 YEARS A  
SOLDIER

5 YEARS A  
POLITICIAN















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History of  
Corporal  
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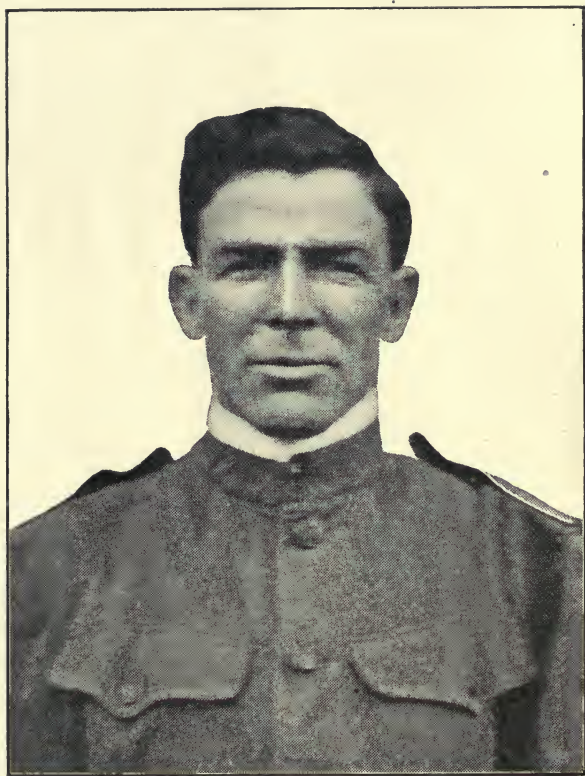
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THE STANDARD PRINTING CO.  
INCORPORATED  
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY



**CORPORAL FESS WHITAKER**  
February 12, 1898, to August 22, 1904



## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

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**A**MONG the people of Letcher County no other man has so remarkable history as Fess Whitaker; none other is so well worthy of being carefully studied by all who find pleasure in the past history and particularly by Letcher's own people. In the winning of friends he stands first; in the upbuilding of the county his influence has been strongly exerted; as a soldier on the battlefield he stands firm. While the moonshiners and ku-klux were provoking the country in my early boyhood as though led by an inscrutable hand were finding their way over the mountains and preparing to establish themselves as the outguard of civilization that they might become the possessors of all the sons of Letcher County, the good mountain mothers, almost unaided, not only stood like a wall of fire to forbid such conduct of the men, but made good their footing, which soon afterward made their loving Christian homes a pleasure.

The strong characteristics of the men and women who, with unexampled courage, endurance and patriotic devotion achieved so much with so little means and in the face of obstacles so great, could but impress themselves upon the people of Letcher County. From

the first mothers they have escaped that sign of Athenian decadence, the restless desire to be ever hearing and telling some new thing to show what good people Letcher County has.

This book claims to be but an epitome of the History of Fess Whitaker; but it will be found to contain a general account, to which interest he has taken by an uneducated man, special and particular incidents, etc. The adult or educated mind will read far more between the lines than is found in the book. The author trusts that he has imparted to the short stories something of that spirit which should be impressed upon the people whose minds and character are still in the formative state—an admiration of their own country and a pride in its past, the surest guarantees that in the future her fair fame will be enhanced, her honor maintained and her progress in all right lines be steadily and nobly promoted.

## HISTORY OF CORPORAL FESS WHITAKER

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**F**ESS WHITAKER was born June 17, 1880, in Knott County, Kentucky. Knott County is located in the mountains of Kentucky between the Big Sandy River and the north fork of the Kentucky River. There are no railroads in Knott County, but there is lots of fine coal (what is known as the Amburgey seam), and lots of fine timber. Hindman is the county seat. Knott County has fine churches and schools and good roads, and, no doubt, the best farming county in the mountains.

When I was only six years old my father swapped farms with Tood Stamper and put the Whitakers together in Letcher County and the Stammers together in Knott County. My mother was old Kelly Hogg's daughter, and in time of slavery my Grandfather Hogg swapped a foolish negro to Mr. Mullins, of Knott County, for a good farm worth \$10,000 today, known as the Black Sam Francis farm now. Mr. Mullins thought lots of his little negro and called him his Shade, meaning that he could rest and the negro could work. But when the greatest man that ever has been elected President of the United States of America, Abraham Lincoln, said slavery was not right and

released the shackles from four million slaves, Mr. Mullins lost his farm and his little negro "Sam Hogg Mullins," too.

When I was six years old my parents went back to Rockhouse, a tributary to the north fork of the Ken-



REV. JIM T. WHITAKER  
Pastor Indian Bottom Church

tucky River, now one mile from the little town of Blackey, or the old Indian Bottom Church. The same year that my parents moved to Rockhouse my father, who was the late I. D. Whitaker, Jr., died. He was the son of S. A. Whitaker, known so well in Kentucky and Missouri. After the death of my father



my mother was left with eight poor little orphan children to raise, six boys and two girls. 'The boys' names are very funny; they are, according to name and age: Fred and Fess, Little and Less, Gid and Jim, and all the rest. And all the rest were the two girls, Julia and Susan.

My mother was left with a very good farm of about 125 acres, and the Rockhouse Creek ran right through the center of it. During those days every spring we had what was known as big tides. The late Bill Wright was the greatest logger and splash-dam man in the mountains of Kentucky. The next year after my father died Mr. Wright had five big splash-dams in the head of Rockhouse and Mill Creek and had between ten thousand and fifteen thousand big poplar saw logs in the dams, and when he turned those five dams loose there was no land or fence left below. So that same spring he cleaned our farm on both sides of Rockhouse and in about ten days here he came with twenty-eight big, strong mountain men, bedding all the logs that lodged. I will never forget what happened. They were all eatin' dinner at mother's, and one man, by the name of Sol Potter, was eatin' big onion blades and he got choked and got his breath all that evenin' through the onion blade, but by good luck Mr. Potter is a real rich man in coal land below Hemphill leased to Parson Brothers and Big Jim Montgomery, and in that bunch of log-bedders was Henry Potter, of Kona, another rich man of the mountains, and a brother to Sol Potter and also a brother-in-law of ex-Jailer Hall. Mr. Wright, the owner of the logs and dams, was murdered by Noah Reynolds just above his home, now Seco. Reynolds

was sent to the penitentiary for life and served seven years and was paroled by Governor Beckham. Reynolds is now a Baptist preacher and lives in Knott County. The Southeast Coal Company is now operating on Mr. Wright's land at Seco, Ky.

After the big tide and all the rails gone and big saw-logs laying out in the bottoms in the corn in April, we had no money, so us boys finished making the crop and minded the stock out of our corn with the dogs until fall. There was no such a thing those days as wire fences, and in the fall we went to the mountains and cut and hauled in rail timber and made rails back out of big white oak trees or black oaks worth \$25 per tree now. We would cut and saw the cuts to make the rails out of about eight feet, would split and burst them open with two good wood gluts and iron wedges and a good old seasoned hickory mall, weighing about thirty pounds. After we got our corn and fodder laid up for winter the people would go many miles to an old horse mill to get cornmeal ground. Everyone would take their turn grinding. They would put their horse into the mill, put their corn in the hopper and then get a switch and start the old horse around. And in about one hour he would have about one bushel of good meal. There were only three mills within fifty miles square. Old Levi Eldridge had one on Rockhouse, and old Pud Breeding had one on Breeding's Creek, and old Fighting George Ison one on Line Fork.

When I was eight years old my mother started me to an old water mill with two bushels of corn to get meal and put me on an old mule named "John," put a spur on my right heel to make the old mule go if



he took the studs. So I was just going across Burton Hill and, like a boy, I wanted my mule to trot, so I applied my spur and he started and I began to bounce around on the saddle, and the tighter I clinched my legs the faster the old mule got, so he ran through a big ivy and laurel patch and threw me off. By luck I only got skinned up a little bit, so I finally caught old "John" and took off my spur and got back on the old mule. It was a very cool, frosty morning, so I went up about two miles to where the late 'Esquire Whitaker lived and I got down to warm. I hitched my old mule to the gate and fixed my corn on better and went into the house. After I got warm I went back out and got on my old mule and went on to the mill at Ben Back's. I got down to take my corn off and there was no corn, so I took back down the road huntin' for my sack of corn. I went back to where I warmed and there I found my sack torn all to pieces. While I was warming the old cows pulled it off of my saddle and the hogs drug it over a cliff of rocks and eat it all up. So I went home and mother sure did fix my back, and then we shelled another sack of corn and mother took it, because it was noon and no bread and a houseful of children and no bread to eat.

I never spoke a word until I was nine years old. I only clucked and motioned for what I wanted. Lots of people thought I was an idiot because I could not talk. I may have looked like one, for I was a little old country boy that never cut my hair in those days only about twice a year, and I wore a big checked cotton shirt and old jeans pants made by my mother and old yarn socks, and 70-cent stogie shoes with brass toes. This was my winter suit and my summer suit was only a big yellow factory shirt and no hat or shoes.

At the age of ten I was taken by my mother and uncle, Gid Hogg, to Whitesburg, Ky., the county seat of Letcher County, a distance of about eighteen miles. We rode an old mare named "Kate," without any saddle, and when I was taken off I could not walk I was so stiff, and that made everybody think I was an idiot sure enough. So when Judge H. C. Lilley opened court on Monday, February 12, they taken



THE AUTHOR, AGE 10

me before the judge. The judge ordered old Black Shade Combs, then the sheriff, to summons twelve jurors and two doctors. One doctor thought I had been born an idiot, and Dr. S. S. Swaingo, of Jackson, held out that I was all right of mind, and so the case was put off until 10 a. m. Tuesday. Then Dr. Swaingo got old Dr. McCray and gave me a thorough examination. The doctors found by examining my neck,

where the small tits in one's neck are, that the tit in my neck had grown together. After the doctors cut the tit loose in my neck I began to talk and to have a good joke. The doctors took me to a one-horse barber shop and had my hair cut and fixed me up and presented me on Tuesday morning to Judge Lilley, and he was surprised beyond reason that I was Fess. So that was Fess's first miracle. Later on they have all been worked out to the present.

When my mother took me back home everybody was surprised and people came miles and miles to see the boy that was so much talked about and to see the boy that had been made to speak after ten years of worthless tongue.

I was put in school at the age of ten years and was known as the funny schoolboy. The children would all laugh at me because I could not talk plain, but it did not take me very long to learn how to stand ahead in my classes. I was very fast to learn in all the books they had those days except arithmetic. The first school I ever went to was in an old log house dobed with mud, with an old-fashioned chimney made out of mud and sticks of wood. The late W. T. Haney, who was murdered on the head of Little Carr, of Knott County, for \$30.00, was the teacher. He was known one day as being the best-read man and no doubt the best educated man in Eastern Kentucky those days. He was the father of John Haney, of Chicago, the expert railroad man, and the stepfather of George M. Hogg, one of the leading men in Eastern Kentucky. Mr. Haney, after hearing all of the children's lessons in the afternoon, would lay down in an old country wash trough for a nap of sleep. The

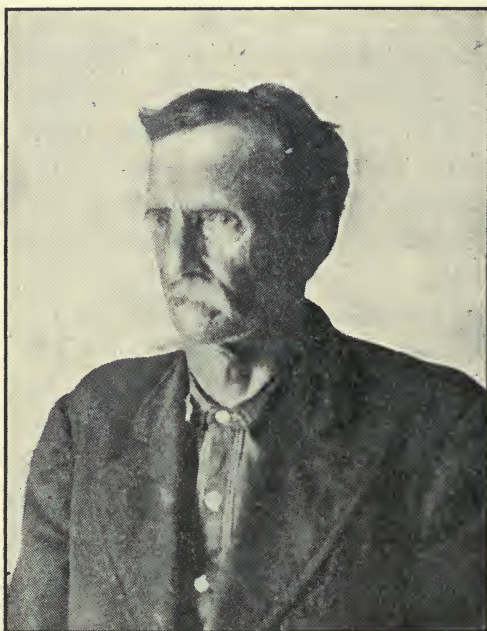


trough was made out of a fine large yellow poplar, eight feet long, and hauled out of the mountains with a yoke of steers. The log was hewed square on one side with a sixteen-inch broadax, then eight inches left at each end and the remainder was hulled out to a big trough, then two holes were bored in the bottom of each end of the trough and four wooden legs, made by hand, were driven into the trough and set up. In the inside of the trough at one end at the bottom was a hole bored and a pin made to fit so that it could let the water out. The water was "hit" and put in the tub and when the "wimen" began to wash they would have what was known as battling sticks and they would apply the water and soap on the clothes and lay them on the eight-inch end of the trough and begin to battle. The old troughs have about all played out of fashion, as the galvanized tubs were brought in and have taken the day; still there is many a one used up to the present day. The soap they used those days was the best of soap. The men folks would cut and haul in out of the mountains so many white oak and hickory trees. They would cut and saw them up and pile them up in a big pile and burn them to get the ashes. After the ashes were cooled off they took them and poured them into a gum called those days that was sitting on some boards that the gum was made to lean on. After staying nine days, on the old moon, water was poured in the gum on the ashes and the red lye began to drop and run out of the bottom into another trough, made like the washin' trough but smaller. After the lye leaked out good and got all the strength out of the ashes, the lye was put in an old country fashion pot and the hogs' guts that had been washed and dried and strung on a pole in the corner of the old

chimney was taken down and put in the pot with the lye. The lye was so strong it soon ate up the hogs' guts and boiled to a jelly-like substance and taken off and put in old big round gourd raised on the farm. The gum that held the ashes was a hollow tree cut down and burnt out inside and sawed into about four-foot lengths for gums.

The second school that I went to was taught by little Sammie Banks, of Big Cowen. Sammie boarded with my mother, and after the five months' term of school was out Preacher Jim Caudill made up a subscription school at the mouth of Rockhouse at \$1.00 each and mother signed for five, and she had no money, but had a good nerve. The first week I went mother took me up in her lap and tried me in arithmetic where the teacher had me, and I knew nothing about it. The teacher was pushing me too fast. Mother told me that she would try me one more week and if I could not do anything in the arithmetic by the next Friday that she would give me a good whipping. So the next Friday came and I had not learned anything, so I played off sick about 11 o'clock that morning at school and went out of the schoolhouse and began to play off crazy, and my sister Julia, now Mrs. J. D. Stamper, of Big Springs, Tex., ran after mother. There being no medical doctor within forty miles, they brought a charm doctor, Andy C——, who rubbed me and charged mother five dollars for it and claimed I had been poisoned very bad, so by Monday I was ready for school. And mother told me what would happen Friday if I could not do anything with my arithmetic. So I tried, and Friday evening mother tried me and I was in long division, but I could not do anything. She got me up in her lap and tried her

best to show me, but all in vain. So she put me down and laid the book upon the table and took me by the hand and led me to a large cedar tree and broke her a good switch and began whipping me. She whipped me until she gave out, and sat down on a large rock-pile to rest and stood me up and talked to me while



**EDDIE BROWN**  
The good-natured schoolmaster

she was resting. After she got through resting she raised and gave me the same dose again; then she took me back in the house and got me up in her lap and began to show me about my lesson, and it jumped in my head like a falling star, and from that time until the present date I challenge the State of Kentucky in the arithmetic. That was my second miracle.

The third school I went to was taught by Eddie Brown, on Burton Hill, in a new log house, with no



chimney and no floor in the house and a big fire in the middle of the house. I always had the rest of the children beat by this time. I was twelve years old and past and had begun to get to be a pretty mean boy on account of so many people picking at me. Eddie Brown, the teacher, told us children if we were not good children that the "Old Bugger Man" would come and get us. So the "Bugger Man" sure did come the next school. I was thirteen years old then, and Wesley Banks had been employed to teach the school, and by this time the school had the name of having the meanest lot of boys in it of any other school in Letcher County. I was called the leader. There were four of us called bad—Mason Whitaker, Ben McIntar, Print Ison and myself. Mr. Banks took charge of the school on July 5, and all the children's parents came in to see the new teacher. So the teacher got up to talk and open his school. He was a very homely mountain man, and the first thing he said was: "This school has an awfully bad name and I understand that Mr. Eddie Brown taught this school last year and told you all that the "Bugger Man" would come if you were not good school children. Now, I am the 'Bugger Man.'"

When he said that every child threw its eyes on him.

"Next one I call their name please come around to where I now stand," said the teacher.

The first name called was Fess, then Print, Mase and Ben. So we all went around to where the teacher was and he said: "Boys, I have bin told that you four boys have bin very bad boys in school, so I am going to turn a new leaf."

My heart was in my neck, for I knew that Mr. Banks had already brought in twelve long green oak switches before opening school.

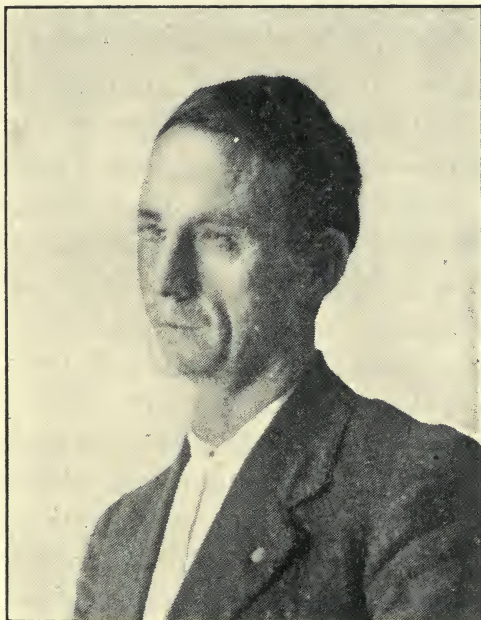
"Fess," said he, "it's reported to me that you are the meanest," and he took me by the hand and sure did like to beat me to death, and when he got through



UNCLE WESLEY BANKS  
The "Buggar Man" school master

with me he told me to take my seat. Then he took Print next and gave him the same, then Mase, and while he was whipping Mase a large splinter flew off the switch and across a twenty-foot house and stuck in under the shoulder blade of the back of Less, a brother of Fess. Then he had to take a pair of old home-made tooth pullers that had been made in a

blacksmith shop by big Jim Back, of Caudill's Branch, and pull out the splinter. After all that he gave Ben the same dose as he did us. He then said that the school had opened, and gave us our lessons. He only had to apply his new rule once. After the free school was out the same old Baptist preacher, Jim Caudill, got up a subscription school again that winter. My



**CRISS BROWN**  
The wooden pistol hero

mother had rented part of her farm to Joe Brown, of Cumberland River, and he had eight boys, and one, by the name of Criss, was very bad. Along during the second week Criss done something and the teacher went to whip him and he bucked on the teacher, so the good old teacher, about sixty years old, put the whipping off until he could see the father of Criss. So that



night Criss made him a wooden pistol and wired a big forty-four cartridge hull on the end of it and made a fuse hole in the end of it and filled it with black powder and drove a stick in on the powder and took it with him to school. The teacher had seen the boy's father and told him about the trouble and the father said to be sure and whip him, so he called for Criss to come around and get his whipping, and instead of going up he ran out of the house and the teacher followed him, but all in vain. So the teacher came back into the schoolhouse and sat down in the chair and started giving out a spelling lesson. The schoolhouse was an old-fashioned log house dobed with mud, and some of the mud had fallen out of the cracks of the schoolhouse. With his big forty-four cartridge hull loaded he sighted it right at the teacher's old bald head and struck a match and touched it to the fuse hole and the old wooden gun went off and the wooden bullet struck the old man right in the head. He jumped up and dismissed the school, very badly scared and bleeding, and never did teach another school. So the next year they got the "Bugger Man" teacher again and everybody came out to see him open his school the same as they did before.

Wesley Banks, at the age of thirty, did not know a letter in the book and began going to school, and at the age of thirty-three received a third class certificate and began teaching and now has taught forty-six schools in Letcher County thirty-seven years in succession without missing, and very near whipped every boy in Letcher County. He was at one time called the best teacher in Letcher County.

At the age of fourteen I became head of the family, as my older brother, Fred, became grown at the age of sixteen and, there being no father to make him mind, he ran around the country one year, doing no good. At the age of eighteen R. B. Bentley, with both legs off, then County Court Clerk of Letcher County, took him into his home and finished his education for him. He is now a well-to-do-farmer and stockman of Richmond, Ky.

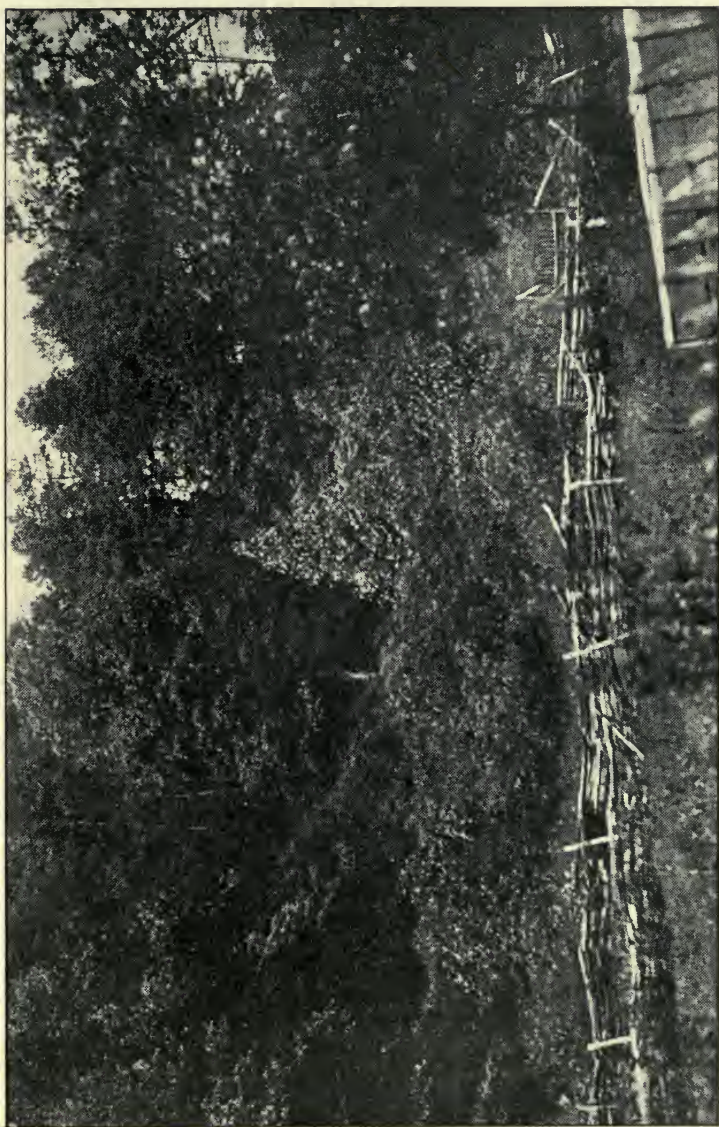
After I became head of the family mother went off one Sunday and myself and the four younger boys run a year-old colt in the stable and we had just killed some hogs, so we got the hogs' bladders off of the hogs' guts and blew them up and filled them up with white beans and they sure would rattle. So I tied three bladders to the colt's tail and opened the door and turned the colt out. There was a large apple orchard all around the barn, it being about four acres square. So the colt started, its tail in the air, then under its belly, then between its legs, scared to death, and just simply burning the wind. "'Pon my honor," when it got to the other end of the orchard it turned to come back and its tail hit an apple tree, causing one of the bladders to burst. Talk about jumping! The colt went up in the air about ten feet, and when it hit the ground it made an awful funny noise and started for the barn. Us boys got out of the way and when it got within ten feet of the barn it made a long jump for the door, and just as it went to go through the door it struck its hip against the side of the door and knocked one of its hips out of place.

Just as soon as mother came home the other boys told on me, so I sure did get some more of that oak tea just like Wesley Banks gave me, and my mother sure was mad.

My mother was a Hogg before her marriage, and sure could whip and whip with a good constitution. I am now fifteen years old and in school and the best attendant in Letcher County. There were about twenty young men and thirty young girls in my class. The school was mostly composed of Bankes, Isons, Fraziers, Caudills, Backs, Hoggs and Whitakers. Burton Hill is located about two and one-half miles from the mouth of Rockhouse. It is a beautiful place and about twenty acres square and all level, covered with large black pines, cedars, ivy and laurel and lots of mountain tea grows there. It lies in the bend of Rockhouse Creek, and the creek runs very near all around it. It is now owned by Less, brother of Fess, of Amarillo, Tex. That is where the late Wesley Collins and Daw Adams built the first church in the lower end of the county. And the first preacher I ever saw was then.

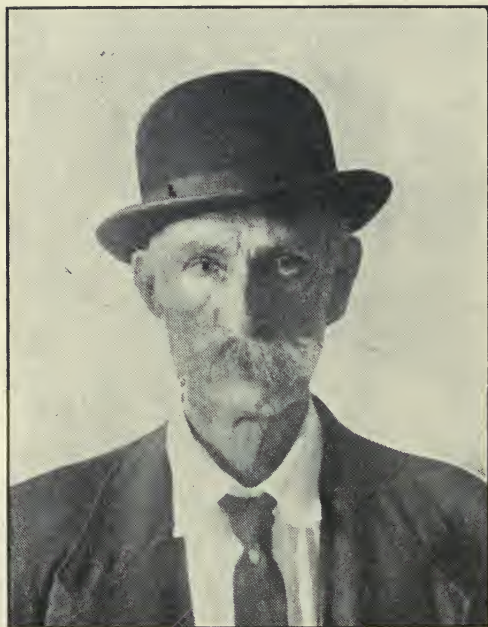
Mother had washed us all up and put a clean shirt on us boys and taken us up to church. Mr. Collins opened up the church like the old Regular Baptists do nowadays. After church was opened Mr. Adams was the first preacher. He was then about forty years old and had been married seven times and stood about six feet and four inches on the ground, and holds the world's champion horse-swapping medal. He had two big long cowboy spurs, one on each foot, and his boots had the pictures of the moon and stars on top of them. So Mr. Adams opened the song book and





BURTON HILL

gave out an old-fashioned song and asked everybody to help sing, and after the song he took his text. Don't remember just what it was, but according to his faith Adams was carried off in a trance and he was squatting and yelling and said: "Brothers and sistern, if this doctrine is from the Lord it's all right, and if it's from



DAW ADAMS  
Mountain Champion Horse Swapper

Daw A. it's no good," and about that time he drove those two big cowboy spurs into his thighs and he gave a great yell and everybody had to laugh. So Mr. Adams never got up to preach any more from that day until this, but he is a good old Baptist Christian and professed a hope a few years ago and was baptized at Mayking, Ky., where he was born and reared up. Mr. Adams belongs to one of the largest genera-

tions in the country and is well liked and thought of by everybody. His great-grandfather came over here the same time that Daniel Boone did, and Boone settled at Kona and Adams at Mayking. Those days times were rough in Letcher County; a moonshine still was in very near every hollow and a blind tiger everywhere. And Adams was a big-hearted fellow and fell on the church that day to get to skin some good old man out of his horse or mule.

Mr. Collins, the other preacher, died some years ago in the asylum at Lexington. He died in good faith and died a regular Baptist, and belonged to a large generation of people and good parents. One of his sisters sailed from New York on February 23, 1918, as head of the Salvation Army in France. You will always find the Collins' trying to live in the faith and always doing something good for their neighbors. Those were the first preachers I had ever seen. I had never been taught anything about churches or Sunday-schools, but since that day I have seen all kinds of churches.

Just before the end of school the late Elijah Banks, who lived on the head of Montgomery Creek on the north fork of the Kentucky River that empties into the river in Perry County, in the great coal fields of Eastern Kentucky, had four grown boys in school, so they set in begging my mother to let me go home with them on Friday evening, and at last my mother consented to let me go. So after school was out Friday evening we all started for Montgomery Creek, about eight miles through the mountains.

We went down to the mouth of Caudill Branch at the three big cliffs of rock, up Caudill Branch to the



mouth of Whitaker Branch, and up Whitaker Branch and across a big mountain well covered with white oak, chestnut oak, red oak and chestnuts and three big coal veins under same; No. 3 veins four feet thick, No. 4 veins six feet thick, and No. 7 veins seven feet and eight inches thick. Over in head of right-hand fork of Elk Creek down we go, and down that fork to the mouth at Uncle Dave Back's and then up a steep hill to the top, and there we found a nice level country, 2,097 feet above sea level, and one of my father's sisters lived there, Aunt Peggie Dixon. All of them came out to see me, and after we left there we went around through the flat woods, and as we went through the flat woods the Banks boys told me that Thomas Gent, a big, rough nineteen-year-old boy, had knocked out Press Hensley's black cow's eye and they wanted me to whip him and they would give me twenty-five cents for it. I told them I would do it. I had the twenty-five cents on my mind, and it was my first piece of money to get, should I win. I made up my mind to win. So now we were around in the flat woods to where Press Hensley lived. The Banks boys called out Hensley and asked about his old black cow getting her eye knocked out. He went on and told all about it, and it sure did go in on my brain, so we had to go down a little steep place through a big chestnut orchard to where the G. boy lived. I went in and asked where the boys were and the old folks said that they were around in the Rich Gap field. That pleased the Banks boys, so just as we got in sight of the field I met Thomas, a very big man, weighing about 140 or 150 pounds. I asked him about knocking the cow's eye out, and, like a mountain man, he said he did. Just as he said it I struck him in the stomach with my left

hand and on the chin with my right hand and he struck the ground, and onto him I went and into his face. I skinned it in a thousand places and I got up and asked for my price of twenty-five cents, which was gladly paid. We all went on rejoicing over the hill to where the boys' father lived.

I never had a better time in my life than I did on that trip, and I also won a title in the fighting ring. The boys' father had thirty-six big, fat bee gums and he got an old rag and tied it on a stick and set it on fire that made a smoke and then took it and robbed a bee gum and taken out a dishpanfull of fine linn honey. Aunt Bettie Ann, now dead, had plenty of good home-made sugar all molded out in teacups and she gave me plenty of it. The boys' father told me all kinds of big war tales and country tales. He sure was a great hand to tell tales, and good company.

We all went wild-hog hunting on Saturday and caught two big wild hogs, then that evening us boys all went down Montgomery Creek about three miles to Wash Combs' to a big country dance. There were about twenty girls and boys and a good banjo and fiddle. They sure could dance some of that old country dancing. Along about 11 o'clock they all got to courtin'. They laid across the beds and hugged each other those days. That was the style. After all the beds were full and no more room on the beds to court they would sit in each others' laps and hug each other. I went to sleep and they put me on a pallet on the floor in the corner of the house. At 4 o'clock in the morning the boys woke me up and we all went back up to the boys' father's.



**MATILDA WHITAKER**

The author's mother. Born February 13, 1848. Died October 30, 1918



So Sunday evening we all went back over the mountain to our school. That was one great trip that will never be forgotten, and my first trip away from home. I learned on that trip to have a nerve and to have faith in myself.

After the free school was out my mother took me up to old Shade Combs', sixteen miles up on Rockhouse, to a winter school. Shade Combs was a first cousin to my mother, and he remembered the time when he was the sheriff and they had brought me to Whitesburg to try and get me on the county, and we had some good jokes about it. Mother stayed all night and next morning she put me in school. Professor C. C. Crawford was the teacher, and I made myself at home and liked school fine and done well in school.

I am now sixteen years old and out of school, grubbing and fencing and clearing land, trying to keep my brothers in school, which I did by hard work. I was known those days as the father of my brothers. During that year my sister, Julia Stamper, now of Big Springs, Tex., was plowing an old yoke of oxen named Dick and Mon, and Little, now Dr. Whitaker, of Blackey, Ky., was driving the old oxen, and I hid behind a big rockpile, wrapped up in a big white sheet, and when they came around the rockpile I jumped at the old oxen and it simply scared them to death. Their tails went in the air and they went across that field just a-flying, and old Dick got the bottom plow stuck in his side and died from the effects of it. Julia and Little ran to the house and told mother what had happened, not realizing it was me that had scared the poor old steers. So I owned it up, and I do believe

that was the hardest whipping that my mother ever gave me. It was funny, but I guess I sure did need it.

The same year during mulberry time on Saturday we all came in about 11 o'clock in the morning for dinner. We had a large mulberry tree down next to the gate and it was awfully full and just getting ripe. So we all made a dive for the tree, five of us boys. We



Dr. Gid Whitaker and Rev. Jim Whitaker  
at ages 7 and 9



Twin brothers, Little and Less  
at age 11

all got right in the top of it and began to eat. After getting what we wanted I began to shake the tree with the boys and they all got scared and fell out. Less got two ribs broken, Little threw his left arm out of place, Gid broke his left leg, and Jim got his tailbone broke, and poor old Fess fell out at the same time and got my left thigh broke. That was an awful sight to see five brothers broke up like we were. Those days there was not a doctor in forty miles of my



mother's. She put splints on our limbs and put them in boxes to keep them straight. The boxes were made out of six-inch lumber. It did not take over thirty-three days until we were all out to work again. We were all hurt that time, so mother could not whip or quarrel at me.

In the same year, but in the fall, mother went to catch "Old John," the old mule I went to mill on. Just as she went to put the bridle bits in the old mule's mouth he turned the other end and mother jumped back to keep the old mule from kicking her. Just as she jumped she stepped on a slantin' rock and fell and broke her right leg square in two. We had our mother carried home and her leg dressed like she did us boys, and she could not use that leg for seventy-four days. The old main stake was sick this time and we got in the hole very bad and in debt, so I had to lay up my education upon the mantle (made out of an old oak board), and on November 1 I took me a piece of raw middling meat, a piece of corn bread and two big onion heads and pulled out to look for me a job. I pulled for Stonega, as that was the nearest railroad, and no job there for a boy like me, so I went on down Callahan Creek to Mudlick and tried, and there I got me a job—the first job—and it was seventy-five cents per day, and board fifty cents per day. This job was wheeling dust from a band sawmill. After working one day and a half I white-eyed on account of the dust and they could not pay me until payday, so I took script for my pay. I then paid my board and bought canned beef and crackers with the rest. That night I caught a boxcar of coke and the train left Appalachia, Va., at 8:40 p. m. for Corbin Ky., and I began then my first

hoboing. I was on my first train, and on the third day I was set off at Knoxville, Tenn., so I began holi-iering and some stranger broke the seal, as I heard them call it then, and got me out of the car and took me to a machine shop and told me to wash myself, and I did. I was just as dirty as a black man not to be black. After the whistle blew for dinner I walked up to the upper end of the yard watching and trying to find out how to catch a train that would take me back to Stonega, Va., for I was sure tired of hoboing. So late that evening I met a colored man walking up through the yard and I asked him where he was going and he told me he was going to try and catch a through drag of empty coke cars for Stonega, and that pleased me to death, and I asked him how far we were from Stonega and he replied about 350 miles. So he said for me to go with him, and I did, and when we got to the upper end of the yard we met another white man headed for Cumberland Gap on our road. So when night came we all went up a little ways out of the yard and made us a bed down by a pile of railroad ties and made a fire and were going to catch the first freight that went up the hill that night. So my two partners asked me to go out to some of the houses and beg us something to eat. I went and knocked on the first door I came to and a nicely dressed lady came to the door and asked me what I wanted and I told her a nice story that I had learned from my partners. The good lady went and brought me a little wooden tray full and some nice biscuits baked out of baking powder, which are fine while they are hot, and after they get cold they are not like sour milk bread, they are hard. So the good lady said to me: "Young boy, I am not giving you these biscuits for your sake. I am giving them to you for Christ's sake."

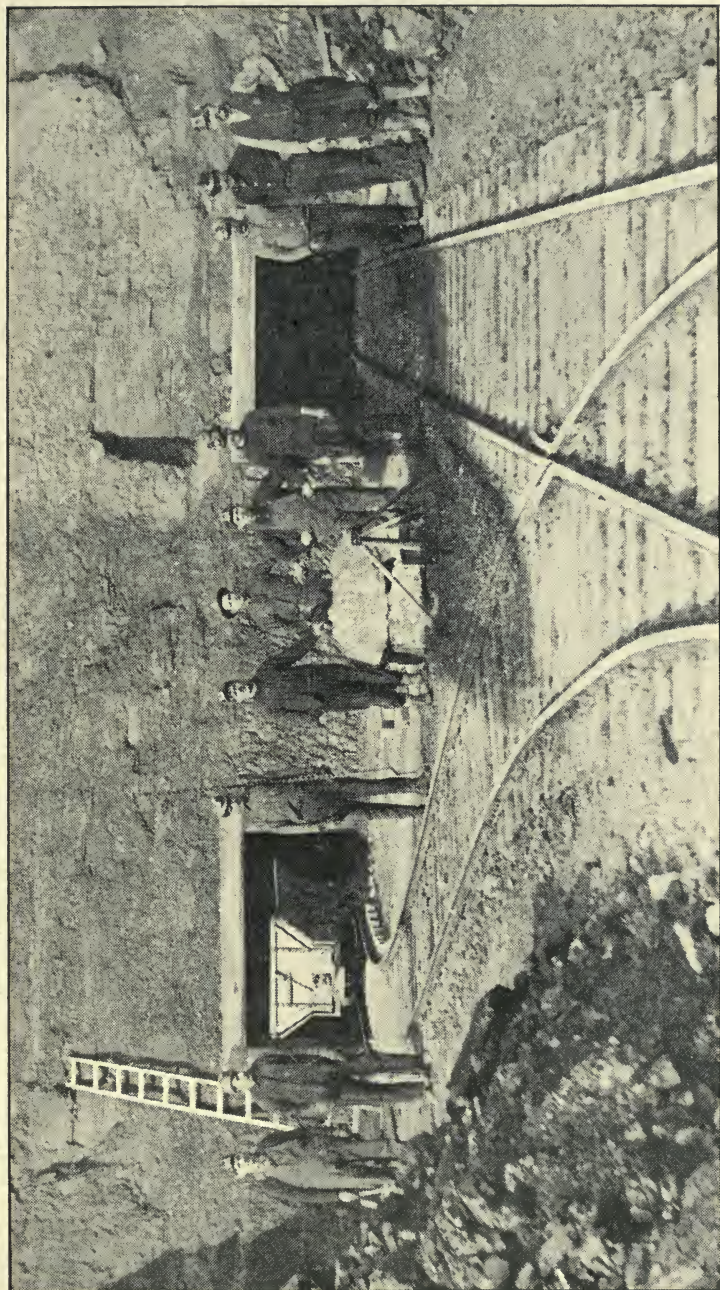
I thanked her and looked her right in the eye and said, "For God's sake put a little butter on those biscuits for me."

The good lady laughed at me and took my name, which I gave her, and she gave me some very good advice, and it is still in my heart today. I bade her good-bye and went back to my partners. They were very well pleased, and after we had supper we talked awhile and they taught me how to hobo, or catch a freight train, and told many hobo stories around the firelight.

We all laid down about 9 o'clock that night on the ground by a good fire. It was getting cool, that being in the early part of November. When I woke up my two partners were gone and I ran just as fast as I could up the hill after a passenger train. After I came to myself I could hardly believe I had done what I had, so I went back down the track to where our camp fire was burning, and there I found the colored man's old cap and my hat gone, so of course I put the old cap on. I did not know what to do, so I decided to make a start back towards Knoxville. I was then about three miles out of the city, and right in the upper end of the yard I met two men. They tried to raise a talk with me and went out to one side and talked and then came back to me and asked me some more questions and finally they took me with them and stopped behind an old dark house about two hundred yards from where they met me and began to whisper, and I believe as I am living today they meant to kill me. And in less than a second it turned as bright as the brightest day you ever saw all around me about three feet square. And those two men just

simply flew, and just that minute it turned dark again and I flew the other way and in about two hours daylight broke and I walked down in the yard to where a large train was made up, as they are called. I crawled into one of the big hoppers and in about ten minutes they coupled a large engine to it and I heard the engine blow two long whistles and about that time a man stuck a big pistol right in my face and told me to get out of there and to get out d—n quick. I bounced the ground in a hurry and begging and rolling on the ground playing that I had sprained my ankle. The man tried to make me walk, but I still played off cripple. He told me to sit down and he asked me what I was doing there and I simply told him the truth and he got sorry for me and told me that he would turn me loose this time, but watch out for the second time. I asked him to get me a walking cane, which he did, and I started hopping along up through the yard. Just as soon as I got out of sight I threw my cane away and sat down and took a good, long, hearty laugh and then got up and walked seven miles to the nearest railroad station, and while there I met an old soldier making his way for Stonega and when the train stopped it happened to be a water tank station, and while they were taking water my soldier partner broke the seal and it was a carload of hay for Stonega. We both jumped in and the next morning we were setting in front of the Big Red Stable at Stonega. I got me a place to board and the second day got a job in the mines trapping at 90 cents per day. Later on I got a job driving a hard-tail, or a mule, in the mines at \$1.30 per day. On the 20th day of February I went home on a visit and took mother and the four boys in the lower room and poured out





STONEGA, VIRGINIA

The place where the author first began to work in coal mines



on the bed \$23.00, all in one-dollar bills. They were all scattered out on the bed. Everybody thought that was some sight. That much money those days and money was scarce. I told mother that it was for them all and for her to keep the boys in school and I would go back to my job and make some more.

On the seventh day of May the mine foreman put me to running an old-fashioned Jeffries motor. I worked one month on that job and went home again. It was thirty-three miles across the big Black Mountains and across the Cumberland River and then across the Pine Mountains to old Uncle Oby Fields' on the head of Big Cowan Creek, then across a small hill onto the head of Kingdom Come (the creek which John Fox, Jr., wrote his two books on), and down Kingdom Come to the mouth of it and then down the river seven miles to my mother's at the mouth of Rockhouse. That was a pretty good walk for a boy only seventeen years old.

I gave my mother on this trip \$45.00 and she was awfully pleased with me and said: "Fess, we need the money bad enough, but you air gittin' 'long bad in yer education, and I can't hardly stand ter see yer do that."

"After I get the other boys where they can take care of theirselves I'll finish my education," I replied, "I am now going to jine the army."

During the Spanish-American War, February 12, 1898, I enlisted for two years' or long as the war lasted. I was signed to Company L, Fourth Kentucky Volunteers, and was stationed at Lexington. After I had been signed to my company there was a big fellow come around and asked something smart,

thinking he was one of those smart fellows, and before he could think I had knocked him down with a big garbage bucket and I had him whipped before he found it out. That built my reputation during my service in Company L.

My Captain was Ben B. Golden, of Barbourville, Ky., and before time to discharge us volunteers after peace was made the Captain resigned and H. J. Cockron was signed as Captain of Company L. And when the First Sergeant, James Day, of Whitesburg, Ky., made out all the discharges for the Captain to sign the Captain came in the office at Anniston, Ala., where we were discharged, to sign the discharges and he took up with the Sergeant alphabetically and asked about each man whom he did not know personally. When he came to my name he asked the Sergeant if that was the man that laughed so much and the Sergeant told him it was, so he had me put down excellent character. Then Captain Cockron signed the discharges.

During the time we were in camp at Lexington some of the boys in my company got body lice all over them and I got scared and took my dog tent and stretched it up under some hedge trees next to the railroad track, and the first night the train went by at 11 o'clock and she whistled some awfully large yells and scared me and I jumped up in my sleep and tore my dog tent all to pieces. I thought the train was running over me. So the next day I fixed my tent up and got me some wheat straw and made me a bed and ditched the water around my tent and it sure did do some raining that spring and my bed rotted. Sleeping in so damp a place I took the fever and

was taken to a hospital. After three days I was taken out of that hospital and put in a division hospital, where I just did live. After three months in the hospital some of the boys told me if I could make my temperature register 98 degrees three times in succession I could get out, and the same fellow told me how to do. He said when the thermometer was put in my mouth and I caught the doctor looking off to draw my breath hard so as to cool the thermometer, which I did, and on the fourth day the doctor ordered the nurse to bring in my uniform and to let me set up some. So when they brought that dear old uniform it was rolled up in a dear old American flag that I had offered to sacrifice my life for. The doctors had given me up to die and had ordered the nurse to wrap my clothes up in the flag so it would be placed with me. It was over one-half of the time that I did not know anything, but when I did come to myself mother was the first I thought about. She had been notified, but on account of being so poor, no money and so many miles away from the railroad she could not come, but waited in great patience to hear from me. The first letter I received after I could tell the nurse who my mother was and her address I got a letter in return in a few days and it is still written upon my heart in large American tears like the dear old mothers are shedding for their loved ones who are in France today in those cold trenches and dugouts and mud and water up to their waists and the top of the earth covered with snow and ice nine feet thick, fighting for the freedom of America, which we are sure to win if God lets this world stand, and I believe we will win this war during 1918.

After I got my uniform and put it on with many wrinkles in it after being rolled up for about four months, I sure did look funny. I was so thin the sun shined through me. After about twelve days I got able to go and I was put in an ambulance and taken to the Southern Depot at Lexington and transported to Anniston, Ala., where I was signed back to my old company. When I walked up through my company street there was the worst surprised set of young men I ever saw. They all thought I was dead and had forgotten me, but when they realized it was sure Fess they all sure did rejoice.

As soon as I got strong enough to do guard duty I was put on guard over at Division Headquarters. I was put on the third relief and I dreaded to see night come. But about 11:30 that night the corporal of the guard woke me up and said: "Get up, third relief."

I got up, straightened myself up and got my belt and gun.

"Outside, third relief," he said, and lined us up and started around with us. I was put on first post. My beat was from the guardhouse to the end of No. 2 post, where there was a large tent stretched up. On the inside were two big dry goods boxes and a dead man stretched on each box covered with a white sheet. The corporal and the man I relieved told me that I was not to let any dogs or cats eat on those men, and every round I was to go in and look at them. That made the cold chills run all over me and my hair stood straight up.

It was in the latter part of May and the wind was blowing and it was cloudy. The clouds were running like they do lots of times when the moon is shining.



My post was up on a ridge and the railroad yard was down on one side and the engine was running up and down through the yards and the old bells ringing and on the other side was an old corral and every once in awhile you could hear an old mule blowing his whistle sounding just like "How are you, Fess?" On my second round when I got up in about ten feet of the tent and the flaps were flapping awfully and scared me very bad, but I went in and looked at the dead men. When I started back, walking very fast, an old cat about twenty feet of me went "meow." I am sure I could have heard it one-half mile and it just simply scared me to death, and when I got to the guardhouse I loaded my gun and got my back up against the tent and there I stood until I saw the first relief coming to relieve me. Nobody knows how good I felt when I saw the light coming down the ridge to relieve me.

I came off post duty at 10 o'clock and I was asked to stay and assist the doctors in operating upon those two dead men, which I did. I had to light their cigars and put them in their mouths while they were cutting them up. They took their insides out and put them in a dishpan, cut their heads open and took their brains out separately and took their backbones out and cut into twenty-four pieces. The soldiers were dying from a disease called spinal meningitis and they were trying to stop it. After the operation their bodies were put back together and well dressed and put in caskets and shipped home. After I got my rest on guard I was picked out of the company and put in the kitchen to help John Gibson cook, which job I held until discharged in 1899. After I was discharged in

1899 I returned to my old Kentucky home back in the mountains, forty miles from the railroad, which I had to walk.

After I spent thirteen days with my mother I slipped off and walked to Jackson, Ky., a distance of sixty-five miles, and enlisted for two years and was sent to Cuba and was signed to Col. Teddy Roosevelt's brigade. That was where Teddy and I first met. He soon took a liking to me, and after the Battle of Santiago Teddy, without a wound and I with a bullet wound in my left arm, took me by the hand and said: "Fess, we have gained a great battle for our country.



THEODORE ROOSEVELT

You or I will be the next President of the United States, and if you get the nomination I am for you, and if I get the nomination I want you to be for me, for you have a great influence in the United States."

We shook hands and parted. So Teddy was from the North and had more votes than the South and beat me to the nomination. But I was for him and am still for him.

After eighteen months in Cuba I was discharged and returned to my same old Kentucky home. When Teddy raised the standing army from twenty-five thousand to sixty-five thousand I became a soldier again. I was then twenty-one years old, that being August 23, 1901. For three years I served. I was

signed to the Fort Slocum (New York) Recruiting Station, and thirty days later I was signed to the "114th Company, Coast Artillery," Fort Totten, N. Y., under Capt. John W. Ruckman, Lieut. Balentine and Kesling. After I had been in that company for a few months the Top Sergeant made me chief cook, which job I held for six months. Then I asked the Top Sergeant to take me out of the kitchen, which he did. Then I had to go doing guard duty again. I soon began to be an expert orderly buckler, which I was hard to beat on. One time I know two of us boys were picked to do orderly, so we took our bayonets and cut the guard manual. McGlofin cut "C" and I cut "T" and I was beat and was given No. 2 post. The next day about 8 o'clock in the morning Capt. Landers walked up on me and said, "Why don't you arrest those two men?"

I presented arms to him and came to port arms and asked, "What two men, sir?"

"What two?"

"Yes, sir," I replied.

"Those two men going yonder," he said.

"What for, sir?" I again asked.

"For being drunk," he replied.

"They are not drunk," I said.

"I am going to prefer charges against you," he told me.

"Very well, sir," I replied, presenting arms again to him.

He went on down to the guardhouse to prefer charges against me, and sure enough he met two drunken men that No. 1 had let in. Old Toomy was walking No. 1 post, so the captain had his belt pulled

and put him in the guardhouse and I saw the corporal of the guard coming with one man and I knew that my time was coming next.

So the corporal came up and said to me, "Turn over your orders," which I did. "Give me your gun and belt." I also did that. "Forward march and down to the guardhouse."

I went, and at noon on Sunday everybody in my company was very much surprised to see me in the guardhouse after I had been beat for orderly. So in the afternoon the Sergeant of the Guardhouse sent me and Toomy to our quarters under heavy guards to get our old fatigue suits and to put our good clothes away. Monday morning I was taken out with the rest of the prisoners and lined up and counted and then signed to do certain work. I was put on the slop cart and a guard over us. We had to go to all the quarters and mess halls and get the slop and haul it off. I and Toomy were to be tried at 10 o'clock and it was raining something awful. My old campaign hat had leaked and my face was all striped with dirt, so when we got over to headquarters they put Toomy on trial first and the court placed Toomy's fine at \$10 and ten days in the guardhouse. They called me in before the court and the judge read the charges to me and asked me what I had to say.

"Not guilty, sir," was my reply.

The judge asked me if I wanted any witnesses, and I told him I did, so he took the names of the witnesses and the commanding officer's orderly was called in and the judge told him what to do. So we started in on my case. The men that tried me were commissioned officers and I was only an enlisted man, but



we were all working for Uncle Sam, so we started in on the case and I stood in with them. After taking the proof I asked the judge to give me ten minutes to argue my case. The judge was surprised, but according to the army rules he had to grant me that privilege, and if I ever did put up an argument that was one time I did, and I soon won my case, and right there I started building myself in the army. Just after I got out of the guardhouse my old-time partner, Teddy Roosevelt, the President of the United States and always doing something good for someone, had an order issued from the War Department stating that all non-commissioned officers must be first-class gunners. All of the companies were lined up and asked by the Captains how many wanted to go up for the examination. I stepped out and all of the rest of the company laughed at me. I was put in school at Fort Totten for a while and soon was taken out of school at Fort Totten and sent to Fortress Monroe, Va., to a fine army school, and from there I was sent to Governor's Island, N. Y., and from there to Fort McKinley, Maine. So after the officers thought that they had me alright I was examined under orderly No. 52-189 and was qualified as a first-class gunner. I was examined on a 14-inch gun at Fort McKinley, Maine. My target was pulled by a tugboat making sixteen knots per hour and the distance was twenty-two miles out in the ocean and I hit the target four shots out of five. The target was only 12 feet square at the bottom and 6 inches at the top, canvas stretched all around it and a 6-inch black stripe painted around the target. One of my shots struck the small target. The bullet which I used weighed 2,250 pounds and the powder charge weighed 640

pounds. I had to load and fire that gun every sixteen seconds. Fort McKinley is located on the banks of the Casco harbor, main channel to the Atlantic ocean, what is known to the War Department as the "She Big Bar." I was examined at Fort Totten, N. Y., on the rest of the examination, which are lots. On Long Island Sound there is one of the best army instructing schools in the army today. After I had qualified as a first-class gunner then I was promoted to a non-commissioned officer and signed back to my same old "114th Company," then I was appointed by my Captain as an instructor. I was picked out of the New York harbor of 19,000 men and put on the recruiting service on a salary of \$65.00, board and railroad fare and traveling expenses and going over the country getting men for the army, which job I held until I was discharged.

I was discharged out of the army August 22, 1904. I now hold two discharges of excellent character, first-class gunner and non-commissioned officer's warrant. Soon as I was discharged I bought me a ticket for Norton, Va., from Norton to my old mining and railroad station, Stonega, Va., and then I pulled across the Big Black Mountain through the same old way as I had traveled when a boy to my mother's home.

Soon as I got home all of the girls began to come in to see me and I sure could court some. All the girls were struck on me because I was a soldier, and after a man has been a soldier for four or five years and gets back home and there being so many pretty girls he wants to marry. So I got struck on four real pretty girls, Susan Cornett, Tina Breeding, Mary Amburgey and the one that made the winning, Mantie Ison. When I made up my mind which one I loved best I sure set in to courtin'.

I first got struck on my wife it was down on Caudill's Branch to "old Stiller Bill" Caudill's funeral. He had made so much moonshine that he bore the name of "Stiller Bill." He had been dead ten years and had 12 grown children, 187 grandchildren and 91 great-grandchildren to mourn his death. His funeral was preached by the old regular Baptist and Ira Combs was up preaching. It was then that I looked under a big beech tree and I saw a big, fine looking country girl. She weighed about 160 pounds, had blue eyes, black hair and big, fine, red, rosy cheeks that God had given her and she had a nose as large as a banana.

Something went down in my heart and it really smothered me so I kept my eyes on her, and the more that I looked at her the prettier she got. Finally she got up and went out to an old country spring to get a drink, so I got up and went out to follow her. I went right to her and said, "Mantie, I am struck on you."

"Now you are just trying to make fun of me," she said.

"No, I mean what I say," said I, and so we began to talk and she and I went back down to where they were preaching.

After the meeting was over I asked her what she was riding and where her horse was. She told me she was riding "old George." The horse had built a good reputation by being a good horse to tram logs. So I rode by her side home and after we got home we began sparking and after months courtin' we one Sunday were sittin' in an old-fashioned country rocking chair out in the back porch. I had her talked down and all she could do was just rock and nod her

head to what I said. She had never seen a railroad or a train of any kind and she had never been to Whitesburg, the county seat of Letcher. She had been kept out of school to help her father run his farm. She could not talk up with me, so I got her head to nodding to everything I said, and I asked her what she thought about us getting married. She nodded right into it and I went home that evening tickled to death, I was so well pleased I couldn't sleep a wink that night.

The next morning about 4 o'clock I got up and got my horse and pulled for Whitesburg to the County Clerk's office. It was a distance of about eighteen miles and was on December 13, and the worst old sloppy, muddy time ever was, but I didn't care, for I was goin' to git married.

After I got my license I pulled back down the river and got to her home just before daybreak and went in. They all slept in one room, had five big feather beds and my sweetheart was laying in one of them. I told her to get up, that I had them.

"Got what?" she said.

"The license," I told her.

She just laughed at me, and don't you know I had to set in and court her about ten more days before she would agree to marry me.

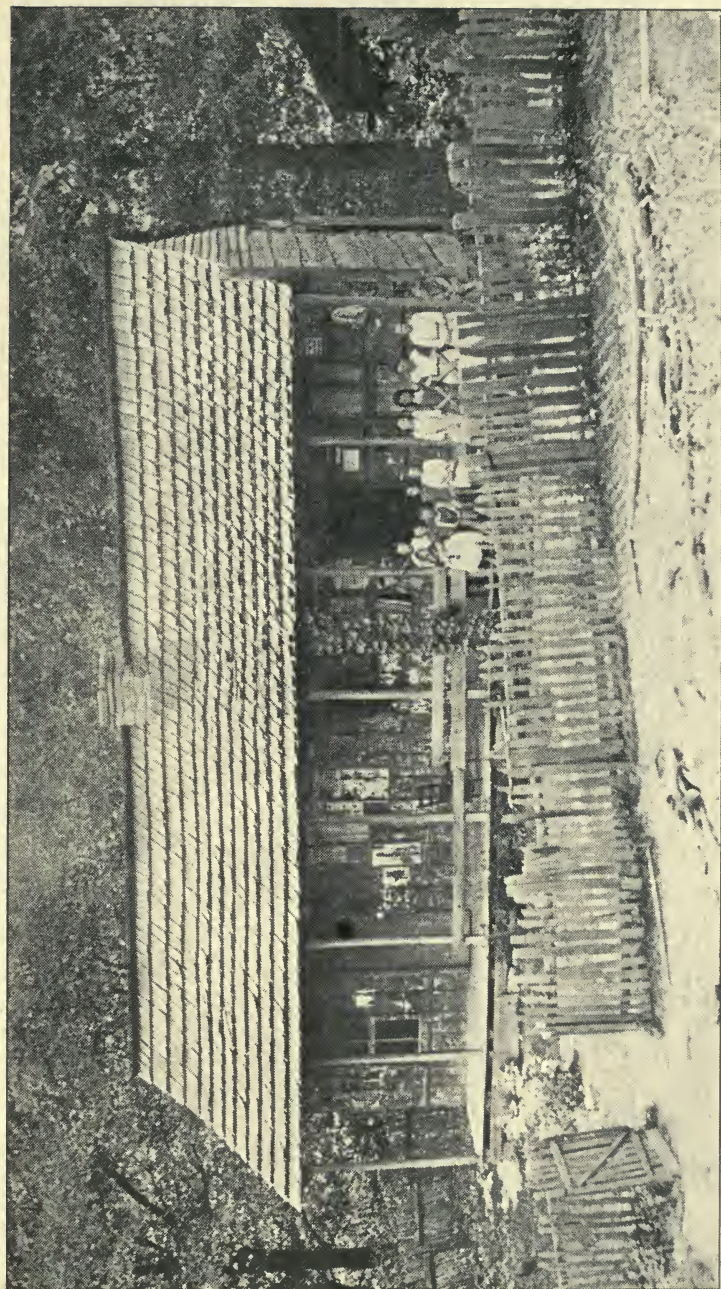
After she agreed the second time we set the day. About seventy-five or a hundred people came in to help eat the wedding dinner, and the biggest part of them stayed for the dance. When we all started around on Elk Creek to get married I turned my horse over to my wife to ride and her father brought out an old mule for me to ride. She had the name of



being the meanest mule in Letcher County. Her name was "Dinah." So I put the saddle on and she only humped up a little, but when I put my foot in the stirrup and threw my leg across the saddle the old mule started right around the hill with me bucking and jumping. And mother began shouting and my wife liked to fainted and had to be taken off my horse. After we all got straightened out we all went down on Elk Creek and the late Jim Dixon, founder of the old Regular Baptist Church of Indian Bottom, told us to stand up and to look him straight in the eye and said don't neither one of you laugh or cry. And the good old man went on and married us. Soon after our marriage we moved out to keep house in an old schoolhouse on Burton Hill.

Mother gave me six hens and one rooster, one old sow and one pig, one cow and calf, one big feather bed and two pillows and my wife got the same from her folks.

We started out living very nice and happy, but my mind was on rambling, as I had been traveling. On January 7 my wife became sick and I had to go after Dr. Roark on Montgomery Creek, about eighteen miles. All my father-in-law's mules were gone to Stonega after a load of goods except old "Dinah," and I was compelled to ride her. So I saddled her up about 4 o'clock in the afternoon and a man held her until I got on, then I struck out down the river and up Elk Creek across a big mountain and on to the head of Bull Creek, up Bull Creek apiece and across another hill on to the head of Montgomery and down Montgomery to the mouth of Dr. Roark's Branch, up the branch to Dr. Roark's house. I got there about



BURTON HILL SCHOOL HOUSE

10:45 that night. Dr. Roark could not come and fixed me some medicine and I started back and went out to the fence to where I had hitched old Dinah and when I went to get on her she started down the branch kicking and bucking. I finally stopped her and got her started out O. K. down the branch, and as I went back across the mountain at the head of Montgomery it was very dark and my old friend "Dinah" got out of the road and we got lost in the top of the mountain. I got off of my old mule, took the bridle in my hand and started for the bottom of the hill and I came to a little log house dobbed with mud and a board loft, nowadays called the ceiling. I yelled and yelled and finally a man came to the door and said, "What do you want?" I asked him who lived there and he told me John Hall. I got down and went into the house and he took one of the boards out of his house loft and split it up and made a torchlight and told me how to go and went out to the fence with me. I got on old Dinah and the man handed me up the torch, made out of boards, and when I started the sparks from the torch began to fall on the old mule and she began to run and kick. After a little distance I had to throw the torch down and I was in the dark again and in the mountain. I had to let the old mule be the boss, as she could see and I could not. Finally she got in the road again and didn't stay no time until she got in under some pines where it was awfully dark and got lost again. Along about 2 o'clock in the morning I rode up to another log hut. After yelling several times someone came to the door and I asked him who lived there, and he said John Hall. There we were back to the same place again. I asked Mr. Hall if there was not another road I could take that would



get me out of there. He told me how to go through the hill to Preacher Jim Caudill's, my old school teacher. And I started off, and after about one hour I got on top of the hill and got lost again. It was so dark and I could not find my way out, as there were no moon and stars shining. So I got down and took my bridle in hand and made for the bottom, and just before daylight I came to another house and hollowed and a woman came to the door and asked me what I wanted. I inquired who lived there and she told me John Hall. Now, I thought I had come to a new house on account of the woman, but when she told me John Hall lived there I thought I would fall off of that old mule I was so surprised and I simply got down and went into the house and waited until it began to break day.

After it got light I started and finally got out of the head of Bull Creek and got back home just as they were eating breakfast. My wife very much improved.

My father-in-law, Jeff Ison, had been elected Justice of the Peace, and J. P. Lewis had been elected Judge, and as yet no Constable had been elected, so my father-in-law began to beg me to let him have me sworn in as his Deputy Constable. My wife cried and made fun of me, but Jeff and I got on our mules and rode to Whitesburg to court, and Judge Lewis, now Secretary of State, swore me in for the office. The first raid I got in was the arrest of twenty-two men and women, known as Barlows and Engles. After I got the warrants I did not summons anybody to help me. I played Johnnie Wise and got all the dope I could on them. There were three bunches of them. I got one man to help me one night and I had to cross



a very big mountain, and about 11 o'clock in the night I was right in the head of Island Branch and I slipped up to a little old board or log house that stood on the side of the hill. It had board doors and no windows and one old big chimney and puncheon floor made out of chestnut wood. I had a mall in my hand and two good guns on me. The first thing I did was to hit the old board door with the old hickory mall with all my strength, and when I hit the door flew open just like lightning had struck it. I was in the house before you could tell how I got in, and I summoned everybody under arrest. Four men and three women came out of those old shuck beds just like wild hogs and come right at me. My man I had summoned to help me had got scared and run off and left me. I began shooting at them, not to kill, but to scare them. I knocked down two of the men and while I was putting handcuffs on them one man by the name of Nathan Engle went up the chimney and got away.

So I brought my two men and three women over to George Whitaker's, at the head of Tolson Creek, and got breakfast. I then took them down to Jeff Ison's and fastened them up in one of his rooms. I then set out to catch Nathan Engle, the one that had got away from me. So I waylaid a small road on the top of Campbell's ridge and just as he passed I nailed him and took him and put him in the same room with the rest of them.

The next morning I went down to Lower Caudill's Branch and got all of them except Mary Engle. She had taken refuge in a large cave just opposite Jeff Ison's on top of a high ridge. Her mother was a very poor woman and she came up and told Jeff if he would

give her ten pounds of side meat she would tell where Mary was. So they traded and Mr. Ison told me. I summoned Gid Hogg to help me make the arrest. I placed Hogg in the county road at the foot of the hill and as I was going up Elk Creek I got in behind her and was in twenty feet of her before she knew it. She made for the cave and I fired at her. Before I got to the cave I saw two bright objects back in the cave about sixty feet. I ordered her out three times and the last time began firing in the cave. I saw her start. The mouth of the cave was full of smoke and she ran by me and took right down the mountain. I took right out after her. She ran over rocks, brush, and a straight line to where I had Hogg placed. When she saw him she whirled on me and made for her bosom. About that time I nailed her and told Mr. Hogg to search her and he took a .38 bulldog pistol out from under her arm beneath her dress waist. She was so mad her teeth just rattled. She had a red calico dress on, which cost about five cents per yard, and a twenty-five-cent boy straw hat on which was painted red out of poke berries and three chicken feathers dyed blue in the right side of her hat. She was barefooted and her feet were all scratched up where she had been hiding and running around in the woods so long. So I took her in and the next day we tried them and they all were convicted and found guilty. I took them all to Whitesburg, a distance of eighteen miles, one day walking and had them all locked up in jail.

Two years ago the same Nathan Engle betrayed his father-in-law, Billie Combs, and told him that he would go with him down in Perry County and help get his wife back, who was known as the famous horse

thief of Kentucky for a woman. So poor old Billie got him a piece of meat and bread and went with him. Nathan put him under a cliff and told him to stay and he would go around to one of the Sloans', who had taken Billie's wife, and get her to come and talk with Billie. The old man fell asleep and Nathan slipped back and shot out the old man's brains and come through that night to his mother's. The old man was found dead on the third day by an old man cow hunting. He was brought back home that day for burial, and Nathan met the train to help take care of his dead father-in-law, whom he had killed. When the train stopped at Blackey the Sheriff stepped off and captured Nathan and he was taken to Hazard and put in jail and tried and sent to the pen for life.

In April, 1905, I was plowing a yoke of steers in the old bent field on Burton Hill and there was nothing but saw briars. My wife was helping me; she was driving. About 10 o'clock the old steers took a notion to go to the river. They raised their heads and started. My wife had a rope on one of them and tried to hold them and got her foot hung under a bunch of those saw briars and fell down. She cried awhile and then I helped her up and we quit work. The birds and the toad frogs were singing and my mind became rambling and I pulled for Texas, the old Lone Star State, and stopped in Big Springs, Texas. I soon got a job with the carpenters' working some three months there. I was employed by the Connell Lumber Company, which job I held until the panic of 1907. After I was out of a job and no money, and having a wife and one child, I began to realize what I had to do. So the T. & P. Railroad shop was there and Mr. Potten was master mechanic of the shops. I laid

away for him one evening and hit him for a job. I had been told by Fred Leper when I shook hands with Mr. Potten to hold tight to his hand and tell him about Teddy and myself in Cuba and I would be granted a job. So I did what Fred told me to, and it worked just like a clock. A job there was sure worth something. A man had to work in the shop those days when the times was good about eighteen months before he could get out on the road or ever be able to fire the engine for old Uncle Johnnie. I began on Monday; one week and ten days I had worked out of the pits to a bell cleaner and I was cleaning a bell one day on one of those big Western Blair engines and George Tamset, the roundhouse foreman, come to me and told me to go out there and fire the switch engine for Uncle Johnnie. There had been a wreck up at Midland and the fireman had been taken off of the switch engine and sent to help bring in the wrecked train. So I got on the switch engine one day and Mr. Davis got mad at me because Mr. Tamset had run me around all of the roundhouse men and I was not to blame. I done the work and done it right and looked after all of the company stuff. So Mr. Davis began to say dirty things about me and finally Homer Scragins told me that Davis was carrying a gun for me and had threatened my life and would not speak to me.

I went home and got me a good .44 pistol and put it under my overalls while I worked and at dinner I would beat the other boys back to our room. Three of us boys were using the same box to keep our dirty clothes in and put our soap and towels in. When the boys would open the box there was the .44 there.



When they got their soap and towels and go on washing I would slip the .44 back in my pocket for protection. One day I passed where Davis was working on the engine and I heard him say, "There goes that d—— r——." I had my gun on me and as I went back to where I was working he struck at me with a monkey wrench. Then the shooting began. I put everyone out of the roundhouse. Billie Lee, assistant foreman, jumped in the turntable pit, and Davis ran through into the blacksmith shop and ran over the blacksmith foreman and got away and never has been heard of since. Of course, I lost my job for fighting on duty and got tried for shooting Davis.

Davis failed to appear against me and the judge dismissed the case. I got tried for the pistol, was prosecuted by County Attorney Brooks, now in France, and defended by Marson & Marson, and I beat the case. They never could prove when I put the pistol on me. They proved I had it in the box and I proved I had the right because my body had been threatened. I lost my job and beat my cases. I couldn't get another job and so I had enough of money to buy my wife a ticket, so I bought a ticket for her home in Kentucky by the way of Louisville and Stonega and thirty-five miles on a mule home.

I then started on another hobo trip looking for a job. I went to the yardmaster in the Big Springs yard, whose railroad name was Bawley and told him I wanted to go to Aboline, Texas, on a freight, so he put me away in the old yard shanty and told me I would get out about 11 o'clock that night. But I failed to get out until 4 in the morning. He put me in the third car from the engine, and when I got in

the car there were two more hoboes in the car, and by the time we got to Sweetwater, Texas, there were eleven of us all in the same car, all hoboes. So we pulled into Aboline about 3 o'clock the next day. I soon found out that there would be a madeup passenger train out of there over the Wichita Valley Railroad to the Fort Worth & Denver Railroad, so I went to the baggage man and showed him that I belonged to the I. O. O. F. and W. O. W. and was dead broke and got him to agree to carry me, and he told me to go up to the water tank and hide in a bunch of mesquite bushes on the right, and when the engineer or Hog Head, known among railroad men nickname for engineers, would look back for the flagman's highball and run and get between the water tank and baggage car and after he got a chance he would open the baggage door and let me in. I done all he had told me to do, but when I jumped out of that bunch of bushes to run for the train there were three more men doing the same thing. So we all caught the baggage car. After a little bit my old baggage friend opened the door and just as he did one of the hoboes jerked it back. So we all rode the end of the baggage car and put our feet on the water tank to rest our legs. We stopped over to take water and, it being very dark, the fireman did not see us. Next to the last stop the negro porter caught us and put us all off. But just as the train started on apast me I caught the rear end of the train and got on top of the coaches. They went about two miles and found out I was on top of the train and stopped the train and the flagman climbed up on top after me, but as he was climbing up on top I was going down the left side of the baggage car. I jumped off and run out in the prairie. They looked all

around and could not find me, so they pulled out again. Just about the time they had got away from me I went under the car on the rods and the fireman saw me and stopped very quick. I jumped off and hit the prairie again. This time the old Hog Head had released his engine and was helping the flagman and conductor look for me. They were all highballing the old Hog Head and got away from me, so I started out walking after the train and in about half an hour I walked into Wichita Falls, Texas.

I went down to the yard and met the yard crew and told them what a trip I had and that I was dead broke and I had a brother that was master mechanic for the Fort Worth & Denver Railroad at Amarillo, Texas. They looked up the record and found that I was right, so they took me to the restaurant and gave me a nice breakfast and told me that I could not catch a through freight for Amarillo before 9 p. m. The first No. 19 would be due at 9 p. m., so I stayed around there until noon and hit the day crew for dinner. They were glad to give me dinner because I could tell a tale to suit anybody. I met a brother I. O. O. F. and I had a real happy day at Wichita Falls, Texas, waiting for the first No. 19 through freight.

About 8 p. m. I goes down in the yard and meet my same old night bunch all sitting around talking. They soon knew that I was the same fellow. One of them asked me where I was from. I told him that I was from Kentucky, and he replied: Kentucky, first 19 is two hours late, and said just lay down and we will get you up in time. One of the boys put an old raincoat over me and at 11 p. m. sharp they called me and told me to get in the first car next to the engine; that

it was loaded with lumber for Amarillo, Texas. I got in at the small window in one end and put the window together and put the key in so no one could see me. The next day about 4 p. m. we landed in Amarillo. I took my key out and opened my window and climbed out; I pulled right straight across town and met an old man with a black oilcan made like the railroad cans. He was old Uncle Johnnie, the city pumper, and I asked him if he knew a man by the name of Less Whitaker and could he tell me where he lived. He took me to his home and I had never seen him for thirteen years, as he had been out West for his health seven years before I went to the army and I served six years in the army. So I knocked on the door and a nice looking Western lady came to the door whom I had never seen before, as my brother had got married in Big Springs, Texas. Of course, I was very black and dirty and had an old dirty suit of overalls on.

I said: "Lady, is Less here?" stepping up to her.

"You mean Mr. Whitaker?" she asked.

"Yes, mar'm," I said.

"He is at the shop" she replied.

"Don't you know me?" I asked, stepping a little closer.

"No, sir."

"You don't? Don't you know Fess?"

"You are not Mr. Whitaker's brother, are you?"

"Yes, mar'm."

She reached out her hand and asked me to come in and I thanked Uncle Johnnie and he went back.

I told her the little story that I had been telling. I had sent my grip by express on ahead of me and could





**LESS WHITAKER AND FAMILY**

**Assessor and tax collector Potter County, Texas, 1916-20**

not get it out that night, so I washed up, took a good bath and put on one of Less' suits, and while I was doing this Ethel got me supper. After supper Ethel and I struck out for the roundhouse and found Less in the office. He knew me in a moment, and we stayed until he got all of his men to work and he put Parker as foreman and we all went to the city and had a real fine time. The next day I told my brother all my troubles and he told me promotion was awful slow on the Denver railroad, and a man can never work himself out of the shop. He also told me that he could get me a job firing on the Santa Fe if I could play the game and he said that the Santa Fe made more firemen and engineers than any other railroad in the world. I told him Santa Fe for me. He took me out to the Denver shop and let me stay two or three days and he told me all he knew and showed me how to fill the lubricator, work the injector, shake the grates and explained the engine thoroughly. But there are some differences to a dead engine and one heated up.

He took me on the fourth day to the Santa Fe shops and took me to the officer and introduced me to Mr. J. R. Cook as his brother and as an old experienced fireman of the L. & N. Railroad. So Mr. Cook replied that he had just promoted ten men and was needing firemen. So he took me down to have me examined and reported back. I got by the doctors all right and Mr. Cook gave me a blank to fill out, and of course my brother filled it out and told me how to do and what to say. Mr. Cook passed me and took my name and hung me up on the extra board. I was seventeen times out. It was about 4 o'clock in the afternoon. I left the number of the house where I would be so the

callboy could find me, and of course I did not sleep any that night for thinking about my new job. So the next morning about 11 o'clock I saw the callboy and he called me for a double-header engine 182 for Plainview, Texas. My brother happened to be by when I was called, and after I signed the book he began to tell me how to play the game, so I got dinner and got my things and pulled for the roundhouse. My train was already made up and engines 180 and 182 coupled together in the yard. I climbed up in the cab and there was a very nice looking gentleman filling the iūbricator. He asked me my name and I told him Whitaker, and I asked his. He said George Scurry. About that time he began to screw his plug back in the lubricator and he turned the steam on too quick and the plug flew out and he had enough lubricating oil on him looked like to fill ten more just like that. He was very mad, as he had been promoted to a Hog Head the day before and he had bought a nice new railroad suit and it was awful to look at. He looked straight at me and replied, "Are you a new man or an old head h—1?"

"I am an old head."

"What road are you off of?"

"The L. & N." I replied.

"Good," he said.

So at 1 p. m. sharp the two Hog Heads coupled our two engines onto our train and Scurry and I got second engine onto our train. The conductor counted his cars and got the crew's names and the orders. I stood and listened to them read these just as if I knew what they meant, but I did not know anything about what they were reading, as my brother failed to tell me anything about a train order or time card. So





FESS AND LESS WHITAKER  
When railroading in Texas 1906-12



when everything was in readiness we pulled out. When the front engineer blew highball I took a large red handkerchief out of my pocket and tied it to one side of my cab and every time I would throw in a scoop of coal I would pretend to wipe the sweat off my face just as if I was an old head. When I started I had 160 pounds of steam and when we went through Zita I only had 80 pounds, only a distance of six miles.

Of course, I knew nothing of how to scatter my coal with the scoop and let the draft place it. I just put it in at the door and very soon had a large black place in my fire, and after we got past Zita he looked at the steam gauge and said, "I thought you was an old head."

"Hell! I am used to those big baffle doors; I don't know nothing about how to fire this little cook stove. If you will show me I will burn her up for you," I said.

"Get up here on my seat," he said, "and I will show you."

So he got down and took his scoop and scaled his fire and told me to look, then he took the clinker hook and got the coal all scattered and picked her up to 160 pounds again. He scaled his fire the second time and told me to look, then he showed me how to scatter my coal with the scoop and I thanked him, and by that time we were going through Hanny Dawn the hill to the water tank. After we left the main line for Plainview, 102 miles, I held my engine at 160 pounds and when we got to Plainview the second engine was cut out for a switch engine to load cattle and we stayed there fifteen days and I showed Scurry that I had learned to be a good fireman on those class of engines by that time. We got orders on the fifteenth

day to bring what loads we had and come in, so the engine could be washed out, and when I got in I got bumped off of my little engine and the next day I caught one of them big kind, and as soon as I got on the engine I had a new Hog Head and I told him just plainly that I knew nothing about how to fire one of those big battleships and if he would show me I would keep the putty for him. I told him I was used to the small engines and he told me to wait until he blew the highball out of Amarillo, Texas, for Wellington, Kan., and then he would show me, and he did, and I kept the putty at 220 pounds and had seventy-six cars of sheep and cattle tied to us. Before I got back on that trip of about eight days I was getting to be a pretty good fireman. It only took me about three months until I held a regular engine and was signed to a big compound engine, 1186, which I held until I was promoted to an engineer in May, 1910.

On one trip to Cloris, New Mexico, my engineer laid off and a man by the name of Brisley was signed to my engine 1186. We were called for 5 o'clock that night, so I was on time and reported at the roundhouse and went on and got my engine and began to clean her up. In about forty minutes the engineer came. We run our engine out of the roundhouse on the turntable and turned her for the west end and pulled up and took water and coal and soon coupled onto the train. The engineer blew his sign to test the air and in about fifteen minutes two car knockers reported the air O. K. and sixty-seven cars. Pretty soon the conductor came over with the orders and read them and he also had a slow order over the bridge west of Hanny and not exceed eight miles per hour. About that time I noticed my clinker hook was

gone, so I had to go back to the roundhouse to get one, and after I got my clinker hook I went up by the caboose to let the conductor know I got one. They was about ten old passenger engineers in the caboose



The author when firing for the Sante Fe R. R. and Engineer Brisley

dead-heading to Cloris to take the examination on air and pumps, as the air car and instructor was at Cloris. So when I got on the engine I told Brisley that we had a caboose full of old hog heads or engineers dead-heading to Cloris. He said: "I'll show them dam rascals how to run an engine."



My engineer began to tell me that the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers were having trouble over him. He went on to say that while he was firing he joined the firemen's brotherhood and after he had been promoted to an engineer that the engineers wanted him to drop out of the firemen's brotherhood and join the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and he had refused and the engineers were knocking on him. He had been married and one of the brakemen had stolen Brisley's wife and ran away with her, and I was told later that Brisley had a real fine looking wife and he was grieving very much and had took to drinking. So he was mad, drinking and in trouble and 102 miles in front of him, and so he called for a highball from the rear and received it and I will say he sure did blow a highball that time. As we went through Zita we were making sixty-one miles per hour and only seven miles to Hanny, where they always shut the throttle off and hook up his Johnson bar. When we hit the switch at Hanny I noticed Brisley dropped his Johnson bar two notches and pulled his throttle out some more and he had my fire just dancing on the grate. I thought he was getting ready to shut the engine off, as there was a very large mountain at the west end of the Hanny switch where they always shut off their engines and every once and a while take off five and six pounds of air. So it was only about three miles to the bridge to where we had the slow orders' so when we passed over the hill at Hanny he did not shut the engine off. I jumped down and went to throw in a scoop of coal. About that time we hit a steep curve to the left and the coal went in the engineer's lap instead of the boiler. He was running so fast and so



many stiff curves that I first threw the coal in the fireman's seat and then the engineer's lap and he said, "Damn it! throw it in the boiler, not in my lap." I growled at him and told him to shut her off and put on the air, and he said no, that he was showing the Hog Heads in the caboose how to run an engine. I knew in another moment we would be dead and I sure began to get ready to die. By this time my lights were all shook out of the racks and my clinker hook and shaker bar had done fell out of the racks. I climbed up and got on my seat and fastened my arms in the little windows and tried to hold myself on the seat, expecting to die any moment. About this time we had hit the bridge and just as the engine hit the bridge she jumped up about three inches and by good luck when the engine came down it hit the rails all O. K. and at the foot of the hill there was a water tank and we were compelled to take water, so on account of the rate of speed she was running she run ahead of the water tank about one-half a mile, and just as he got her stopped before he could reverse her those ten Hog Heads come out of the caboose just like they had been shot out a 14-inch gun. And after he got her reversed he backed up to the water tank and took water and after he got water I simply told Brisley I was not afraid, but I did not want to be killed by a fool and refused to go, so he set in to beg me to go and I could see every inch of the road in my mind, and from there on it was uphill and I knew he could not run any more. Not thinking of coming back, I agreed to go on, so we pulled out and reached Texico about 11:50 p. m. There he got one pint of whisky and we pulled on over into Cloris and cut off from our train and put our engine away, washed up

and went to bed. We should have been called at 10 a. m. next morning, but the callboy could not find us, so we were called for 2 p. m. We got on our engine and the head brakeman took us over to the stock pens and picked up four cars of sheep and took us back in the yard to No. 7 track and coupled us up to forty-seven more cars of sheep and cattle, and Smyers, trainmaster for the A., T. & S. F., came up to our engine and said to Brisley: "Brisley you have been reported up three times for fast running and I don't want to hear of it any more, but I want those cattle and sheep in Canadian, Texas, before the dog law gets you."

He could run without the trainmaster giving him any hints, and I began to get scared, for I knew it was all down hill from Cloris, N. M., to Canadian, Texas, except two hills which we had to go up.

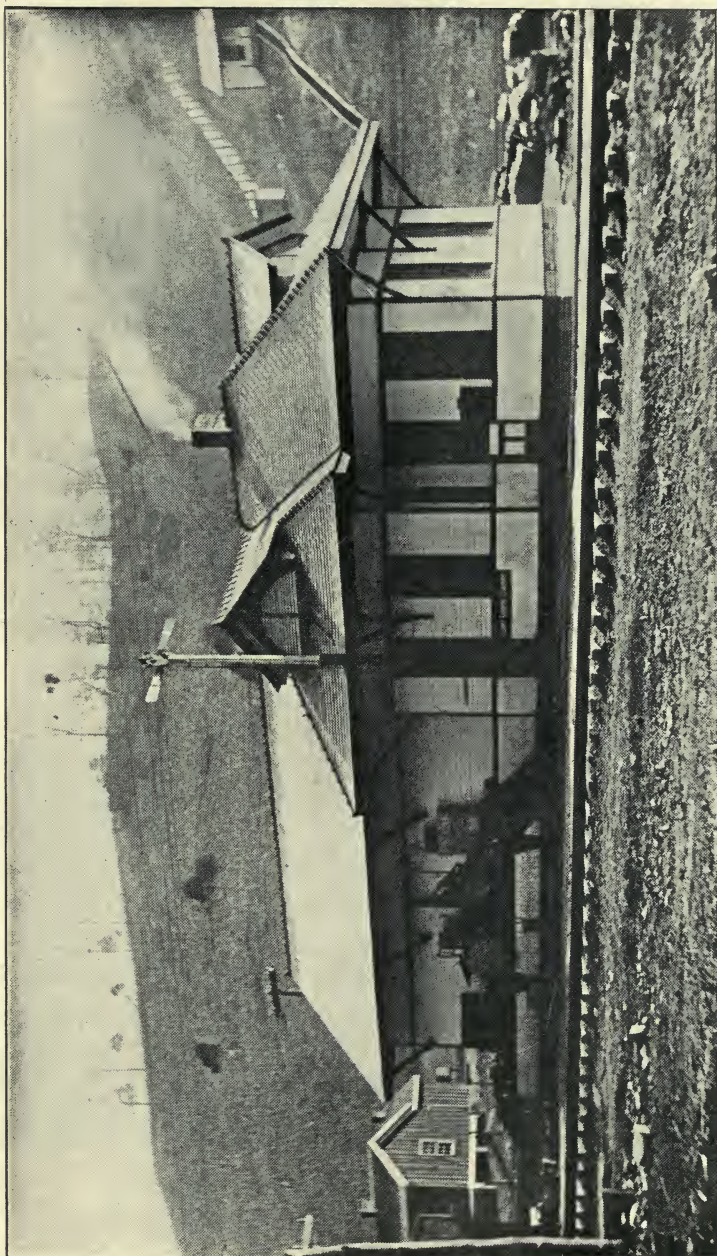
So we received our orders and pulled out. After we left Texico I don't remember very much what happened. He was running so fast I could not think, as he was running faster than I could think. Every town on that road of three hundred and nine miles was cleaned of all the dust. What he did not blow out he sucked out with the speed of our train. After I got over the awful scare I noticed everybody sure did sidetrack for him, and just as we called for the Canadian station he ran over a flag and through a train, splitting six cars of sheep and one car of cattle square in two. There were sheep in every man's house, lot and yard in Canadian, but by good luck our engine run out in the sand and turned over and neither one of us hurt. So Brisley got his walking papers and the last time I heard from him he was in Mexico working for the Mexican Central Railroad.

I was promoted to an engineer in 1910, which job I held until I resigned, November, 1911. I then returned to Kentucky and went in the mercantile business at Goard and during the building of the I. & N. Railroad from Jackson, Ky., to McRoberts, Ky., and after the road was put through I sold out my mercantile business and went to Lexington to get a job. The business was very dull and the company did not need any engineers and Mr. Kishhammer, the trainmaster, gave me a job as brakeman, Lexington to McRoberts. I gave my whole attention to the company's business, and any time I was asked about anything I could tell it and after braking nine months I was taken off the road and made depot, freight, ticket and express agent and operator at Blackey, Ky., which job I held for three years, when I resigned to run for Circuit Court Clerk.

I ran against two large generations of people, S. P. Combs, who was the Circuit Court Clerk at that time and who understood tricks in an election, and my other opponent was G. B. Adams, a young lawyer and a Regular Baptist preacher. Not knowing anything about politics, I was defeated by thirty-six votes. There were eleven voting precincts and I carried nine of them.

After the election in 1915 I went to work for Mr. D. S. Dudley, president of the Kentucky River Coal Corporation. I bought all of the land on Rockhouse and Caudill's Branch for him and helped to lease the No. 4 coal for him, and they have one big lease at the mouth of Rockhouse known as the Rockhouse Coal Company, owned by three real fine men, Mr. McClanahan, of Charleston, W. Va., one of the nicest men I ever met as a business man, and the other two are





BLACKKEY DEPOT



just fine big business men, Wallbolt and Arthur, of Toledo, O. Next comes the Marion Coal Company, at the mouth of Caudill's Branch. The managers are old big, fat, happy-go-lucky men, John Gorman, of Hazard, and William Morrison, of Jellico, who are splendid gentlemen. With the coal experience then comes the Caudill Branch Coal Company on the head of Caudill Branch; same stockholders as the Rockhouse Coal Company. All of this lies in two miles and a half of Blackey, Ky., and the new L. & N. branch comes in at Blackey.

Blackey has one of the best colleges in the State of Kentucky. It is managed by Prof. E. V. Tadlock. The college was built by Dr. Gurant, of Wilmore, Ky., and the land was donated by Jeff Ison. Blackey has one large coal operation going on now. The managers are a bunch of real nice gentlemen with experience and are P. J. Cross and J. P. Jones.

The next big coal company is on Smoot Creek. The first company is known as the Smoot Creek Coal Company, managed by one of the Knoxville, Tenn., big-hearted fellows, who has an open hand for everybody, a nice big smile and who has written some excellent lectures for Tennessee, Mr. C. P. Price. Next are the West Virginia and Kentucky Coal Company, managed by two brothers of Virginia with that good, clear, good-hearted disposition. Harry is a whole-souled man. If you were broke and he had a dime he would give you a nickel of it. The other brother, T. P., has that good old fighting look on, and he put in his part in the Spanish-American War. Next are the Amburgey Coal Company, managed by two of the real Kentucky blood, Mr. Mathews and



HON. W. S. DUDLEY  
President Kentucky River Coal Corporation

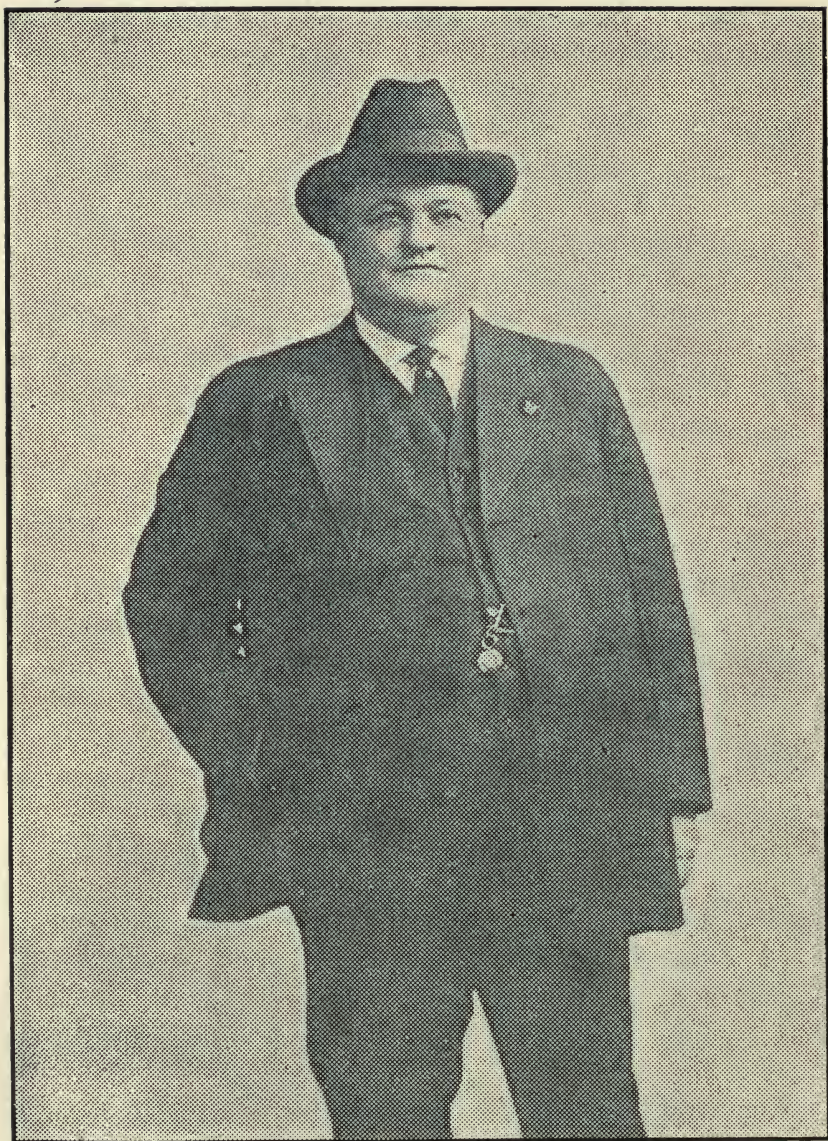
Mr. McCluren, of Covington, Ky. Mack is just a dandy only he gets his politics mixed up. All three of the coal companies on Smoot Creek are working. The Amburgey seam, which is about eight feet without a parting. Rockhouse companies are working that good old No. 4 seam, 56 inches coal, 4 inches parting and 11 inches coal.

After this was all done I resigned from the Kentucky River Coal Corporation and announced myself as a candidate for Jailer of Letcher County, subject to the action of the Republican party, August 4, 1917. There were already fifteen candidates on the track for Jailer and I made the sixteenth man. We all met at Whitesburg to draw to see who come first on the ballot and I told them all if I drew number seven they just as well quit, so we all drew and by good luck I got my old lucky number seven. I set out campaigning and made a speech on Line Fork, then I started for the coal fields. I first spoke at Kona, next at Seco, both on Sunday, and I met one real nice gentleman who was manager of the Southeast Coal Company, Mr. Pfenning, who was and is operating the late Wright's coal I wrote about in the beginning. Seco is a real nice little city. No colored people nor foreign people are allowed there. Next was at Fleming, Ky. I had a big crowd. Lots of other candidates were there and everybody spoke. During my speaking judge Day was setting upstairs in the hotel with the manager of the Elkhorn Coal Company. After I had carried Dick off in a trance he whispered to Judge Day, "Lest just elect that d—n fool," and after the votes were cried at Fleming I had received two hundred and thirty-four votes out of two hundred and thirty-five. Mr. Coal is a clean-hearted gentleman and



stands by his men and his county. He is liked by everybody. My next speaking was at Haymen. I spoke to the colored people. There were about four hundred of them and we had prepared a real good supper for them. Had a fine barrel of beer and had some good speakers, Congressman John W. Langley, Commonwealth Attorney R. Monroe Fields, Mr. Noah Bentley, of Jenkins, and others. I was late getting in. I reached Haymen about 11 p. m. and the crowd was coming out. Some run in and told them I had come. So the bell was rung and everybody went back in and I had to make a different speech if I got the crowd stirred up. So there was a big Negro with a palm beach suit got up and introduced me. I says: "Gentlemen, I am real glad to be with you tonight, but sorry that I am late, but I want to say to you colored brothers I am your Jailer for the next four years and I am going to be the Jailer. Nobody is going to tell me how to run my jail. Instead of making prisoners out of you I am going to make Christians," and everybody said "Amen" and shouted. I am going for everybody to read the Bible. "Amen," they shouted again, and if they don't by G—d, I will make them read it. "Amen," and great cheers went up. All the negroes and speakers began to look at me and I told them I was going to put the colored men in the colored department and the white men in the white department. I was talking to a gentleman the other day, your Commonwealth Attorney, R. Monroe Fields, the way I was going to handle my prisoners, and he said, "Fess, that won't do; Bill Hall tried that and he let some bad negroes get out of the negro department." Gentlemen, I mean what I say; if the jail won't hold them in by G—d, let the county build a jail





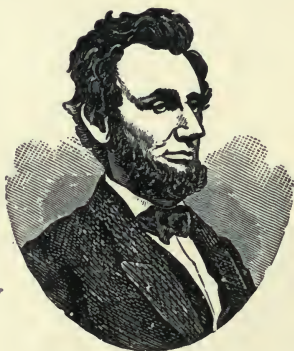
**HON. JNO. W. LANGLEY**  
The author's political friend





LETCHER COUNTY JAIL, BUILT 1908

that will hold them in. Everybody shouted amen to that and yelled "Fess for Jailer." I bluffed off six of my opponents that night. Next we all were billed for Hemp Hill, another regular negro speaking night. We had about six hundred negroes out and so I had to wait until my turn came as all of the speakers had to speak. My turn came about 1:30. Everybody had heard of me and they were all waiting for my time, so I set with patience; and just as I got up I looked over the crowd and believe me there were about four



ABRAHAM LINCOLN

hundred negroes assembled. Something run all over me. Something said, "Fess, wake them up," and I started pounding it to them like Billie Sunday preaching. I saw that I had them going my way and finally I walked off of the stage and down the aisle to where an old gray-headed man who had served in slavery time. I began to pat his head kindly, hugged him up and told him what our dear old friend Lincoln had done and I told them that Lincoln was a man of nature; he had picked his education from the moon and the stars and little rippling streams. His ambition was to be elected President of the United States so he

could free the slaves of witches. He was, and he released the shackles from four million slaves by this time. I had them going my way then and I took the younger class and began to tell them what the Ninth and Tenth Cavalry and Twenty-fourth and Twenty-fifth Infantry done in 1898 in Cuba when Roosevelt and I had made such a fight and that old Ninth and Tenth Cavalry cut the wire fence and let Col. Roosevelt through the fence and up the hill with his rough riders and the old Ninth and Tenth Cavalry cutting their heads off with sabers, and there were twenty-four pieces in the Twenty-fourth Infantry that played the band that won the United States a great battle. After we had planted Old Glory on top of the little log house there were only two men left in the band; one was lying on the ground with a leg broke playing "Marching Through Georgia," and the other had his left arm off and was playing "Yankee Doodle." By this time I had the crowd shouting and hollering. If a man had ever stirred up a crowd I had.

I and Miss Martha Jane Potter were both to speak at Jenkins and the auditorium was running over, full of white people and negroes, and they had a splendid band. I took Jenkins with a storm, and after Miss Potter, daughter of Henry Potter, the coal magnate of Letcher County, delivered her speech I was next introduced by Professor Greer. I told them in a very funny way that I had to peal to Jenkins very hard because she had the votes at Dunham, Burdine and Jenkins proper, and that I had none at home because I lived in the only Democratic precinct in the county and that I had five brothers, forty-three uncles, two hundred and seventy-one first cousins, and Jeff Ison, my father-in-law, and all were Democrats and I was



the only Republican, so of course you will all want to know how come me to be such a strong Republican, so I will tell you. My father died when I was very small and left my mother with a house full of little orphan children and no money. Mother had two old milk cows named Blackey and Whitey, and every year prior to Cleveland's administration she would sell the two little calves off of the cows and buy all of us boys a pair of brass-toed shoes, but "God bless your soul" during Cleveland's administration they failed to have any calves and we all had to go barefooted, so I have been a Republican ever since.

After the speaking I met some of the nicest gentlemen I believe I ever met, such as Mr. Dunlap, Johnson, Keron and the general manager of the Consolidation Coal Company, Mr. Gellote, and the right arm of the B. & O. Railroad were on the ground making a hard fight for me. Mr. McLaughlin will never be forgotten by me. I also had sixty-three traveling men between Jenkins and Cincinnati that were doing all they could for me. They had tried me at Blackey for agent for three years and I had a regular traveling men's meeting at the Whitesburg Hotel and I made a strong promise to them: "Gentlemen, if you will stand by me and should one of you get in jail I will treat you nice and give you three good square meals per day and when your time is up I will turn you out," so they stood, and when you get the traveling men for you I will say you have won, and I won it by the biggest majority any man ever was elected, five hundred and six, over Sol Wright, of McRoberts. I received more votes than any man ever did. There were eighteen voting precincts in the county and I

carried seventeen of them and lost the other one by one vote and I received six votes more than all of my ten opponents together.

I am now the Jailer of Letcher County and have thirty-two prisoners in jail. I have Sunday-school every Sunday in my jail and preaching twice per month; had four conversions and they told some great experiences. I have had my living and prisoner department cells painted and water works put in and I challenged the State of Kentucky Jailers to cleanliness, and everybody has got to take their hat off to my Courthouse Square. I am now having moonlight schools in my jail and I have turned out three young men who did not know a letter in the book, can write, read and spell.

I am sure the Jailers of Kentucky can do some great work in the moonlight schools, and as we handle the toughs and the uneducated and after we can teach a man to read he can read where many a man has made a mistake. The people have been so nice to so many Jailers. About one hundred and twenty jails in Kentucky, so lets us promise the people of one hundred and twenty counties that we will do something good for some poor boy or girl. My jail is a nice stone building with four bedrooms, dining and cook room, woman department, a nice dining-room for the prisoners and only one prisoner department for white and colored together, as the colored department was destroyed before I got in charge of the jail.

Letcher County can brag on three things that the whole United States and world can't beat. First, she has the name of raising the largest man in the world, Martin Van Buren Bates, better known as Brother

Bates. He was born twelve miles above Whitesburg at the mouth of Boone Fork, where Daniel Boone first settled. The property is now owned by Henry Potter. When Brother Bates was seventeen years old he fought side by side with bad John Wright in the cavalry. The first battle they were in was fought on Licking River near Salyersville, Ky. Brother Bates rode a big white horse give up to be the whitest horse in the Civil War. After the close of the Civil War Brother Bates come back and lived with his father, John W. Bates, at the mouth of Boone.

Brother Bates' father came from Washington County, Va. At the age of twenty-four Brother Bates weighed four hundred and eighty-five pounds and stood seven feet and four inches tall, and one of his boots, number 23, held one-half bushel of shelled corn. He joined a circus when he was twenty-eight years old and traveled all over the world. He got married in Canada and on one of his trips while in England the King and the Queen presented each one of them a fine watch. The watches were about the size of a saucer. Brother Bates has retired from the circus business and is a well-to-do farmer at Seville, Ohio. His wife weighed five pounds more than he did. They had one child born to them and it weighed twenty pounds at its birth and died seasick crossing the Atlantic Ocean. Brother Bates is eighty-one years old now and has only one brother living, Robert Bates (better known as Old Rob), who lives on the head of Rockhouse. He is the richest man in Letcher County and Knott County. He is worth over one hundred thousand dollars. He was ninety-three years old August 5, 1918. Uncle Rob is the oldest champion daddy at ninety-three. His oldest

child is fifty-seven and youngest seven. Uncle Rob has twenty-four children. His descendants are well over a hundred. Some say that there are many great-grandchildren alone not counting the grandchildren of the great-grandchildren, of whom there are at least ten. Uncle Rob confesses that he can't count his flock. Outside his children he has thirteen children at home yet. The other eleven are married and their families are scattered. Uncle Rob has been married twice. At home this remarkable Kentucky father is still the unquestioned master. His politics are the household's. He lives by rule and by rule he governs. It don't pay to pamper youngsters. Bring children up to respect you and they will respect themselves. Children have got to be taught to save. A good wife is the best of all; a man can't get ahead without her. Women should help their husbands.

Children are seldom sick in the mountains and Uncle Rob says give them a dose of sassafras tea is medicine enough. Uncle Rob has not been sick a day in his life. He is five feet and eight inches tall and weighs one hundred and eighty pounds. He stands straight and walks with splendor. He has the shoulders and chest of a perfect built man. He does not smoke or drink. Uncle Rob says he has gone hungry many a time to save a quarter and has never been sorry of it. One would expect a man who owns most of the mountains in his section and who is worth one hundred thousand dollars to live in a fine house, but Uncle Rob prefers the old house and bare floors like the old schoolhouse on Burton Hill.

The house which Uncle Rob lives in has been built seventy-eight years at the writing of this book. Uncle



Rob is on his way to Mount Sterling with a drove of cattle, a distance of two hundred miles, horseback. Uncle Rob never did have a suit of underwear on and never did wear a collar and very fine socks. His wife makes his socks and shirts.

The second thing Letcher County can brag about is a real mountain dog raised by Henry Mullins on the head of Cumberland. The dog was as large as a real mountain cow. He was sold to Sells Brothers' show, Big Stone Gap, Va., in 1880 for seven hundred dollars. He was taken all over the world and won the champion medal, king of all dogs.

The third was a real pumpkin raised by old Jim Hogg of all at the mouth of Tolson Creek. The pumpkin weighed one hundred and ninety-six pounds. After cutting both ends off any ordinary man could crawl through it.

One of the most peculiar men ever Letcher County had was old fighting George Ison, on Line Fork, whom we wrote about in the first of the book. In the time of the Civil War the Yankees had stolen all of Uncle George's horses and cattle except one old black and white pided cow. When spring came he would have one of his negroes, named Wesley, to plow the old cow and cultivate the land. He would put one-half yoke on the old cow and a home-made plow stock and plow from one-half of an acre to one acre per day. He would milk his old cow every morning and evening and make the gravy for his slaves.

He stayed full of moonshine whisky very near all of the time after he lost his first wife. He left Line Fork to go courting above Whitesburg to see Aunt

Vina Adams. He had a brinnal cow bringing to Whitesburg to be shot for and the old cow would not lead very well and he wanted to get up to Aunt Vina's home before dark, so he tied his cow to his old horse's tail and put the spur to his old horse, which was well known in Letcher County by the name of Blue Jack, and just as he crossed the river at Whitesburg the old cow got stuck up in the quicksand, and the old man, feeling so good and his mind on his "sweetheart," then about fifty years old; he looked back to see his cow about the time he hit the main street of Whitesburg and he noticed that his cow was gone and also old "Blue Jack" had lost his tail completely.

He got James H. Frazier to look after his cow and he got one quart as he went through Whitesburg and went on to see Aunt Vina. The next day he came back to Whitesburg and some man had heard of him being such a fighter and told him that he had come over two hundred miles to fight him. So he got down off of "Blue Jack" and in about fifty minutes old man Ison had him well whipped. That was the biggest fist and scull fight that was ever fought in the mountains of Kentucky. After the fight was all over old man Ison set his opponent up a glass of good apple brandy and they drank friendly and shook hands and parted.

Old man Ison and Gudson Ingram, both of Line Fork, two large, strong men, uneducated, and when Letcher County was cut off of Perry County, Letcher County had to have a jail house, so the contract was let to be built twenty by thirty, and those two big strong men took the contract to deliver all of the windows and doors and iron fixtures. There were no

roads, no teams hardly and a very few wagons, so they carried all of the iron on their backs from Lexington. They walked every step over the mountains and every step each way. They made three trips in one month from Whitesburg to Lexington and returned and only got thirty-seven dollars for the whole job. They averaged one hundred and forty pounds apiece per load. On the first trip to Lexington they enjoyed themselves fine and everybody that saw them enjoyed themselves. They was the pure typical mountain type; wore home-made shoes, called moc-casins, old jeans pants and coat made by their wives on the old-fashioned looms, and flax shirts.

Letcher County boasts of having the pure Anglo-Saxon language and the pure typical mountain form and ways of life and the people of Letcher County through its scientific management is at the root of successful present enterprise and intelligence in not only the lives of bygone men and women but youths are looking for a foremost day.

I will try and describe one of the most peculiar men that was ever raised in the mountains, Elisha Ingram. Elisha Ingram was born at the mouth of Kingdom Come Creek in the year of 1865. When a boy he was a peculiar turned boy. When he was about twenty years old he could eat more than ten men. He wore number thirteen shoes. He lived in the woods most of his time and was reported one time to the revenue people to be a moonshiner and there were seven marshals who came from down in the State and made the raid. He hid in one of those big caves in the head of Line Fork. The marshals went in the cave at 8 o'clock in the morning and came out about 2 o'clock in the afternoon with Mr. Ingram.

They found that he was not a moonshiner, but a merchant or a hardware man. When they came out they brought twenty-three big guns and thirty-one trunks full of old rags. Mr. Ingram has been seen with as many as three trunks on his back at the same time, bringing them across the big Black Mountains and taking them to his cave or store, as it may be called, in the top of the Cumberland Mountain, which is one of the world's great sceneries, as well as the Mammoth Cave down in the State.

During the Civil War in the year of 1864 Daw Adams, who preached on Burton Hill, was making his way through the mountains from his home, three miles above Whitesburg, the county seat of Letcher County. He stopped over night on the head of Kings Creek and stayed with Mr. D. D. Fields, now one of the best known lawyers in the mountains of Kentucky. Mr. Adams had a real bench-legged dog and Mr. Fields wanted the dog and so Mr. Adams gave him the dog. The dog's name was Swad Dink. Mr. Adams never told Mr. Fields that there was anything peculiar about this dog. So Mr. Fields was well pleased over his dog and the next morning Mr. Fields wanted to try his dog and so he set him on a hog, and instead of the dog going forwards and running the hog he ran it backwards by turning the other end. Time makes changes, so Mr. Fields is now the son-in-law of Mr. Adams and has one pretty little girl named Danola.

There has been some great men and women raised in Letcher County and they have been some very, very strange people raised in Letcher County and some very bad men and done some awful crimes, but



what more could be expected of some people who have had such a poor chance as men and women born in the mountains of Kentucky. There has been lots said and wrote about Letcher County and its people that is not true. The moonshiners have given dear old Letcher a black eye, but thank God that day has passed.

Old Letcher stands first in wealth. If the whole united world would shut down all of their coal mines Letcher County could furnish the whole united world coal for thirty years. We have more timber in Letcher County than in any other county in Kentucky. We have twenty-six big mountains in Letcher County well covered with timber, such mountains as the Black and Cumberland and others.

We have some of the richest corporations and companies in the United States, such as the Consolidation Coal Company at Jenkins, Kentucky and the Elkhorn Coal Company at Fleming, Ky. As to schools, Letcher stands first. Letcher can boast of the best of schools and churches. You don't see any of those old log schoolhouses any more, but they are the latest styles. Likewise are the churches. As to language, there is but a very few people who use any more of that good old bygone days language. The old spinning wheels and looms are about all played out. We have three large beautiful streams of water flowing through Letcher County, the Cumberland River, the north fork of the Kentucky River and Rockhouse Creek. We have the purest water in the world. The air is just fine. Many people come to the mountains to get fresh air.

We don't have any wild animals in our mountains. We have some poison snakes, such as the copperheads and rattlesnakes. Clint Cornett last year killed seventeen copperheads and rattlesnakes each on Pigeon Ridge of Line Fork, all under one edge of a rock all rolled and coiled up together in the same bed just like owls, prairie dogs, cotton tails and rattlesnakes do in Texas in the prairie dog towns.

While I was in Texas and before I went to railroad-ing on the trains an old passenger engineer and I went to Davis Mountain bear hunting. We killed two black bears and caught one young bear. We saw quite a few droves of antelope and it was a very heavy fine to kill one, but we did, and we had some real good eating. We was in the western part of Texas and came in at El Paso, Texas, on Friday. We went over the river into Old Mexico to a big bull fight. It sure was something awful to look upon. I will try and explain it to you as I saw it.

It was a holiday, celebrating the big day of Republic, the fifth day of May. They put three bulls imported from Spain against four native bulls. The owners from Spain were artists when it come to butchering horses. If they had killed a few of the ignorant and cruel Mexicans who were riding the poor beasts up to be gored to death they would have won my applause. One horse was injured six times and each time ridden to be gored again, until finally killed by the bull. It was enough to disgust old "Villa," whom General Pershing run out of Mexico in 1915-16, and still men and women and little children went wild and shouted for joy at the sight of blood and the suffering of the dumb brutes.

The engineer was an American and had been born in Louisville,, Ky., but was working for the Mexican National Railroad and had been hurt in a wreck and had a six months' layoff. After the bull fight we visited the noted Church of Guadalupe, which is said to have been built by Montezuma in memory of the angel Guadalupe. After going through the church



FESS WHITAKER

and seeing the "sirape" (blanket) which this angel saint wore on her flying trip from Heaven to Mexico City, we climbed the hill to the graveyard where all the noted warriors are buried. It covered a couple of acres, and a guard with a rifle and sword is kept on duty night and day. On coming to old General Santa Anna's grave I thought of poor Davy Crockett and his brave followers, who met their fate in the Alamo

at San Antonio, Texas, through the inhuman blood craving of this same old general. The earth mound where he sleeps was plastered over with all kinds of fancy many colored pieces of broken chinaware. One particular pretty piece took my eye and I told the engineer, Mr. DAVIS, that it would be in my cabinet of curiosities if it should cost me a heavy fine. The engineer said, Fess, that it would mean possibly death or a long term in a Mexican dungeon if I were caught stealing from this "big chief's" grave, but when he found that I was determined to risk it with this copper-colored son of old Montezuma he agreed to assist me by steering the guard away to another part of the graveyard and try and keep his back towards me by asking him questions about the city, which lay at our feet in plain view. The guard stood in sight with the seat of his white cotton pants towards me when I climbed over the sharp painted, tall iron pickets and secured the piece. I wondered if poor old Davy Crockett turned over in his grave to smile at me.

David Crockett's parents died when he was a very small boy and he had seven brothers older than him and he soon learned to use his mouth and fist. Poor little Crockett when a boy had nobody to sing him to sleep or teach him a prayer. Davy Crockett was born August 17, 1786, in Limestone, Tenn. He was born in a little old log hut with no floor in it.

Crockett's ambition was to "go ahead." He was made Colonel during the Indian war, then he was sent to the Legislature. David Crockett was a great bear hunter. When war broke out with Texas and Mexico he pulled out for the West.



After he got to Fort Worth he bought him a Mustang pony and rode all over the plains and had many a good race with buffaloes, as Texas was well covered with all kinds of wild animals then. After hunting about two months he pulled straight for San Antonio, Texas, and soon was in the Fortress of Alamo, where the great fight lasted for sixty days. He was received in the fort with shouts of welcome. They had all heard of Col. Crockett through the influence of the Texas rangers. Most of them from the United States had declared their independence of Mexico rule and had set up a government of their own.

Col. Travis was in command of the fortress. They only had one hundred and fifty men in the fort and had to go up against the whole Mexican army. The Mexican army fired on the fort in February with President Santa Anna at the head, whose grave I stole my pieces of chinaware off of. One morning Crockett was awakened by a shot against part of the fort in which he was sleeping. He dressed in a hurry and before they took the fort he had shot six gunners dead from behind a cannon that had been placed in the front of the Alamo. Day by day the fortress of the besieged grew darker and darker. There was no hope of aid, food and water, all had failed them. David Crockett kept a journal of the daily happenings in the fortress. On the sixth day of March the entire Mexican army attacked the Alamo and the resistance was desperate. When the fort was taken only six men of its defenders were living. Poor little David Crockett was one of them. He was found in an angle of the building behind a breastwork of Mexicans whom he had slain.

It is said that in the assault upon the Alamo the Mexicans lost more than a thousand men. The six prisoners were taken before Santa Anna, President of Mexico. Crockett strode along, fearless and majestic. Santa Anna was displeased that the prisoners had been spared so long, frowned and said that he had given other orders concerning them. The swords of his men gleamed and they rushed upon the unarmed prisoners. The dauntless Crockett gave the spring of a tiger toward the dark leader, Santa Anna, but before he could reach him he had been cut down by a dozen swords. Crockett's last words were, "Liberty and independence forever." At the death of Crockett he was not quite fifty years old.

Forty years ago there was lots of trouble and feuds in Letcher County. Will try and give the public a true story about two killings by the same man and both men that was killed were Banks'. Link Banks was killed forty years ago by J. H. Frese, and William Banks eleven months ago by J. H. Frese. I now have Mr. Frese in my jail under a sentence of life waiting to hear from the Court of Appeals.

Early in the eighties Letcher County, Ky., now a very rich and flourishing mountain county, was the scene of innumerable feuds. So bitter was the feeling that the Judge of the Circuit Court and the Commonwealth's Attorney did not dare punish any of the feudists, knowing that a vigorous prosecution and a conviction of the member of either faction would be followed by their own murder at the hands of the adherents of that party. Cases were on the docket that had to be tried, and the Governor appointed Judge William L. Jackson, of Louis-

ville, to try them. It was understood that there was not a lawyer in the district who would act as Commonwealth's Attorney on these trials, and that it would be necessary to procure a Commonwealth's Attorney from some other district, and Judge Jackson announced that he would appoint Major W. R. Kinney, of the Louisville bar, to act as prosecutor.

In those days there were no shorthand writers in any part of Kentucky except Louisville, and it was arranged for one to go along so that in the event of a conviction and the necessity for a bill of exceptions it could be easily and promptly made. A party of six men started from Louisville. The court never did know what the other three went for, but inferred they were a bodyguard, as they were all members of the State militia. Railroads are now running through Letcher County, and the boom town of Jenkins is just across the mountains from Whitesburg, then, as now, the county seat. But in those days they had to ride horseback 100 miles across the country to get here. They went from Richmond to Paintsville, to Prestonsburg and up the Big Sandy Valley to Whitesburg, and going up every man of them wanted the best looking horse to ride. Coming back they all fought for the quietest looking mule. Traveling in the Kentucky mountains a sure-footed mule is a jewel; but they didn't know that when they started out.

Well, they blew in on Saturday night and were all so dead beat that they wanted to get to sleep as soon as they could. Just before they went to bed the proprietor of the hotel (Jim S——) came to the room for something and saw them standing in front of a couch with long white nightshirts on. He stared at



them and seemed stupefied. Finally he managed to ask them what that was they had on.

"A nightshirt," one said.

"Do men sleep in them thar things whar you come from?"

One assured him that they did.

"Well, I'll be damned!" he said, and the next day they found he had surreptitiously taken their night-shirt out of their room to show some of his friends what the "furriners from down below" slept in.

They got up in the morning, and, stepping out of the building which by courtesy they called a hotel, they saw a mountaineer named Bill D—— with his trousers in his boots, the typical long, fierce-looking mustache, and his pistol hanging at his left side. They had not been shaved since they left Louisville. They had been on the road about a week and needed a shave badly, and, addressing the mountaineer, one said:

"I beg your pardon, sir, but will you kindly tell me where the barber shop is?"

When he turned his face on them they almost started to run from him. They did not know that they had said anything to provoke anger, but in all their life they had never seen as vicious a look as he gave them as he bellowed:

Barber shop? Hell! You know thar hain't no barber shop in this country, and we don't 'low for you'uns to come up to this place and make fun of we'uns."

They hastened to assure the gentleman that it had never occurred to them that there was any place where they didn't have a barber shop, and they said to him:

"You see we need a shave, and we must have one. How on earth can we get shaved?"

"Shave yourself," he said.

"But," said we, "there are two reasons why we can't shave. We haven't any razor, and in the second place we can't."

"Well," he said, "go over and see Jim Frese."

He directed us to Mr. Frese's place and we went over there and found a nice-looking gentleman about thirty-five years of age, whose very appearance put us at ease. We stated to Mr. Frese the object of our errand, told him that we did not know there were no barber shops here and we had not brought a razor. He said he had just finished shaving, which sounded good to us after our experience with the mountaineer on the hotel porch, and that he would be delighted to let us use his razor. We took the utensils, lathered up one man and began shaving. He watched the process. About every three pulls he made with the razor he cut himself twice. We remember it was a very keen razor, too. He noticed the poor job he was making and said to him:

"You are not accustomed to shaving yourself?"

"No," said he, "I have never shaved myself in my life before."

He offered to shave the crowd and we thanked him and told him we would be pleased to have him do it and he leaned one of the men back in an ordinary high chair, stretched his head back and Mr. Frese began shaving him.

Mr. Frese's house was well kept, neat and clean, much more so than that of any other mountaineer with whom we had come into contact in the journey across the country, and his language was well chosen and grammatical. His whole appearance

betokened a man of affairs in the community. We thought it a splendid time to commence getting information.

We remember distinctly that he used the word "murder" instead of "killings." He was pulling the razor over our taut neck just about the jugular vein, and he said:

"Well, the last man who was killed, I killed him."

We gave a start, and it was quite a bit of luck that he was not cut, so great had been our involuntary jerk. Immediately he said:

"Do you want a close shave?"

"No, just once over," he responded hurriedly.

It afterward turned out that Mr. Frese was, as we had sized him up, one of the leading citizens of that whole section. For anything you wanted or anything you wanted to know, you had to apply to Jim Frese. And this very thing had gotten him into trouble.

One morning Link Banks, a mountaineer, came into Whitesburg, tanked up on moonshine whisky, and, meeting Black Shade Combs, another mountaineer, said to him:

"I came in to kill somebody this morning, and I just believe I'll kill you."

The prospective corpse was not "heeled," as he was not in any feud just then, and was not expecting trouble, but he knew that he would have to act, and quickly, by his wits, or he would be shot, and he turned on the fellow and said carelessly:

"Oh, pshaw, don't kill me; kill Jim Frese."



"Well, I believe I will," and Link Banks, the killer, staggered over to Jim Frese's store. He had never had a particle of trouble with Mr. Frese, as nobody else up in the section had ever had, but he walked into the store where Mr. Frese was behind the counter and raised his gun and cut loose at him. He missed the first shot and Frese dropped down behind the counter, ran some twelve or fifteen feet, grabbing his pistol as he went, and rising that distance from where Link Banks, the mountaineer, expected him to rise, got the drop on the latter before he could change the direction of his pistol and killed him.

The Circuit Court was in session and a majority of grand jurors were in Mr. Frese's store at the time and saw the whole occurrence. Upon the convening of court the grand jury requested the Commonwealth's Attorney to draw up an indictment against James Frese for manslaughter and submit it to them. This was done, and about ten minutes after the grand jurors went to their room they returned and said they had a partial report to make and handed back the indictment against James Frese for manslaughter with the word across it "Dismissed." Frese was never further brought before the court on the charge.

But we did not know all this when Mr. Frese was calmly pulling that razor over one of the men's neck and saying:

"The last man who was killed, I killed him."

Even in those feud days there were a great many law-abiding Christians in the mountains, and it was our endeavor to cultivate friendly relations with as many of these as we could. Judge Jackson had sternly admonished our whole party to pursue this course.

One Saturday evening when court adjourned early to allow the witnesses to get out to their homes for Sunday, we noticed in an end of the town which I had not yet explored, a long, low, wide building, and I inquired of R. B. Bentley, one of the residents sitting near me, what that building was.

"That," he said, "is a church house."

"A church! Why, do you ever have services up in this section?"

"Yes," he said, "about eight or ten months ago thar was a circuit rider come along and we had meetin'. We only have meetin's when somebody comes along. We hain't got no regular preacher."

"Well," said one, anxious to get solid with all churchgoers, "we are going to have services tomorrow morning."

"Who's gwine to preach?" he said.

One of them said: "Major W. R. Kinney, the Prosecuting Attorney, teaches a Bible class at home. He is the finest talker in the United States, bar nobody, and I will get him to preach."

We were not speaking in hyperbole when we were telling him of Major Kinney's attainments as a orator. We have reported all orators of the past quarter of a century, and we have never heard his equal. He had the vocabulary of a Proctor Knott or President Lincoln. He had diction and voice equal to W. C. P. Breckinridge. He had the dramatic instinct of John P. Irish and Bourke Cochran, and as to fluency of speech William Jennings Bryan is tongue-tied compared with him. This was the character of orator that was going to turn loose on that mountain congregation.

So the news was spread that we were going to have "meetin'" next morning. Saturday evening we went over to the church house—everything in the mountains is a house. The court is a courthouse, the jail is a jailhouse, the hotel is a tavernhouse, etc.

They had a small organ in it and we tried to find the organist and choir. We learned they did not have an organist, but they had about eight or ten big strong-voiced singers, and, as they played the organ after a fashion, we took the bunch over and we rehearsed four or five hymns.

The next morning at service we had a very good crowd. In fact, everybody in the town was there. Before the preaching it occurred to us that the Major, being such a dyed-in-the-wool Methodist and so well posted on the tenets and dogmas of that faith, the temptation would be for him to preach a doctrinal sermon. We knew that the Baptists and Presbyterians were the strong denominations up in that section and we did not think Arminian doctrines would appeal to Calvinists, so we took the Major to one side and told him that no doctrinal sermon went; that Christ crucified to save sinners was all that he should preach, and he agreed to it and preached a sermon the only equal of which he preached later that day.

When the services were over very few went to the Major; they all came to thank the remainder of us for the wonderful sermon we had procured for them and immediately requested that we have "meetin'" again that night. Of course we agreed.



To this day those two sermons are discussed and gone over by the old residents.

Early in the month of November, 1918, William Banks, of Smoot Creek, came to Whitesburg to give his depositions in a suit filed against J. H. Frese for destroying his peace. Mr. Banks had sued Mr. Frese for \$10,000 damages. His lawyer, Mr. Lewis, of Hyden, Ky., was in town, and Mr. Banks walked up and into the courthouse and went in the Sheriff's office and asked about Mr. Lewis, if he was in town. He was informed that he was in Mr. Hawks' office, which was somewhere in the Bank building. Mr. Banks walked out of the courthouse, up the sidewalk about fifteen feet and across Main street towards the First National Bank building, where the lawyer was. Just as he got in front of Lewis Brothers' store Mr. Banks slapped his hand on his breast and hollowed and ran into Lewis' store and fell. He died in about five minutes with a thirty by fifty bullet hole square through him, hitting him in the back just under the shoulder blade out in front by the left nipple.

Nobody saw the shooting, but the bullet came very near killing Judge Sam Collins, and lodged in the window sill of the First National Bank. In about ten minutes Sheriff Charlie Back, Commonwealth's Attorney R. Monroe Fields and County Attorney F. G. Fields located the bullet in the window sill and, searching its range, it proved to be the shot fired from the back door of Frese's store building. So they went in Mr. Frese's store and he was sweeping and they told him they wanted to search for the gun. He told them to help themselves. So on searching they found two big forty-five pistols and a regular army rifle, and

not one of them had been fired. So they took the weapons with them and put a guard around the Frese store. They went and cut the bullet out of the window sill in the First National Bank and the ball was so large it would not fit any gun that could be found in Whitesburg.

So the Commonwealth's Attorney, R. Monroe Fields, was not satisfied with the search in Frese's store and went in the second time, and on arriving the second time he told Mr. Frese he was not satisfied with the search and wanted to search again. Mr. Frese told him to search all he wanted to, but he was sure there were no more guns in the store. Mr. Frese had fired the deadly weapon and had made a regular pocket under his counter to hide the gun when he got the chance to fire his deadly shot into Banks after he had taken Mr. Banks' wife.

The Commonwealth's Attorney searched good the second time and was about to find the gun and Mr. Frese began to get scared and tried to lead him away from the spot and to look behind the hats on top of the shelves, so this made Mr. Fields know he was close to the gun, and after moving three planks he pulled her out of her deathly hidden hole. The gun was still hot and the powder was in the barrel and the bullet that was taken out of the window sill just fit the gun that was found last, thirty by fifty.

By this time Mr. Jesse Day, Justice of the Peace, had issued a warrant for Mr. Frese, accusing him, and he was placed in jail. On the next day, November 10, the examining trial was held by Judge H. T. Day and he was held over to answer such indictment that the grand jury may return without bond. January term

the Judge, John F. Butler, was sick, and when the April term of Circuit Court came Mr. Frese was indicted for willful murder in the first degree and his case was continued until the August term. An order was made to bring the jurors from Clark County, as Frese swore that he could not get a fair trial in Letcher County and a change of venue overruled.

So Mr. Jim Tolliver, the Sheriff of Letcher County, brought seventy good men from Clark County, and a splendid jury of twelve men was selected from that body of men. Now, our Circuit Judge, J. F. Butler, became sick again, as he is in bad health and had to quit again, so all the lawyers of the bar and the attorneys on both sides agreed to appoint the Hon. H. C. Faulkner, of Hazard, Ky., to try the Frese case. The jury selected was:

W. G. Butler,	W. B. Sudduth,
W. A. Judy,	J. H. Riggs,
A. F. Mastin,	M. L. Mareland,
Zack Brown,	B. C. Taylor,
Elburge Babor,	W. E. Rice,
Zane Ellis,	W. C. Taylor.

The prosecuting attorneys were Hon. Grant Forrester, of Harlan, Ky.; Commonwealth's Attorney R. Monroe Fields and County Attorney F. G. Fields. The attorneys for the defendant were: Lawyer Floyd Byrd, of Lexington; W. K. Brown, Whitesburg; Senator Ed Hogg, Paris; Judge Benton, Winchester; D. D. Fields, Dug Day and David Hayes, Whitesburg; W. C. Dearing, Louisville, and Hon. Bill May, Jenkins, Ky.

The Commonwealth finished in four days and taking the proof of the defendant's side finished in

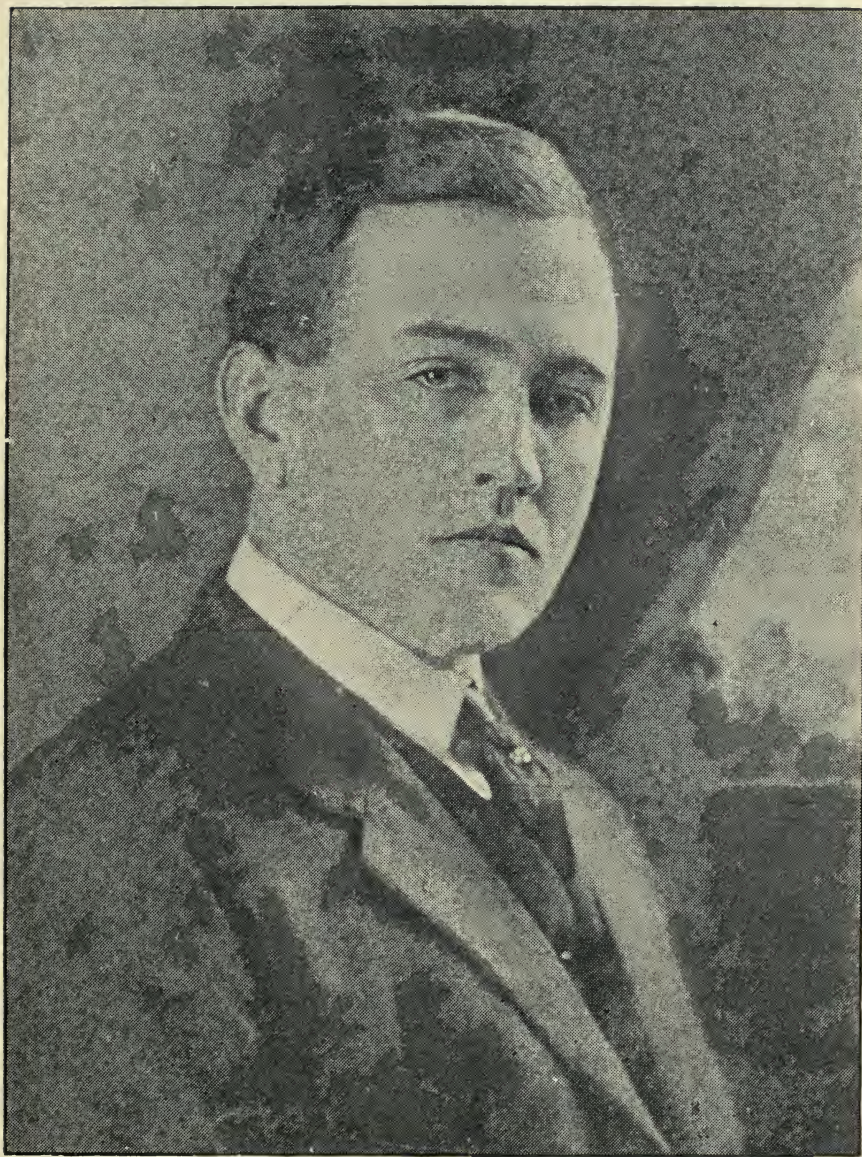


three days. Then the argument began, of which Judge Benton was first, then F. G. Fields, Senator Hogg, Grant Forrester and Judge Byrd. Then R. Monroe Fields finished. The argument from the defendant's side was very poor. The attorneys left the case completely and all they done was to make fun of Letcher County and its officers. The attorneys for the Commonwealth stayed with the case and the proof and a verdict was rendered in about fifty minutes for life in the pen.

The first vote was seven for the chair, four for life and one for two to twenty-one years. When the jury asked the Judge for pen and ink to write the verdict with the Judge ordered me to bring out the prisoner. The courthouse bell was rung and the courthouse was full in ten minutes. The jury came out of the jury room and took their seats in the jury box and the Judge asked them if they had a verdict and they answered, "We have," and the Judge ordered them to read it and it was read. If I ever saw an intelligent jury in my life that was one. After the verdict was read the attorneys for Frese asked for a new trial and a change of venue, which was overruled by Judge H. C. Faulkner. Then the attorneys for Frese took the case to the Court of Appeals for a new trial and change of venue and were granted sixty days to hear from the Court of Appeals.

Mr. Frese is a very wealthy man. He owns all kinds of coal and timber land.

The Letcher County docket stands clear without a murder case on the book now—thank God for that—and I am glad I have lived to see old Letcher stand ahead in law and order. We must give the Hon. J.



**R. MONROE FIELDS**

**Commonwealth's attorney, 35th Judicial District, Letcher and Pike Counties**



F. Butler, Judge of the Thirty-fifth district, and also our Commonwealth's Attorney, R. Monroe Fields, credit for nine-tenths of it.

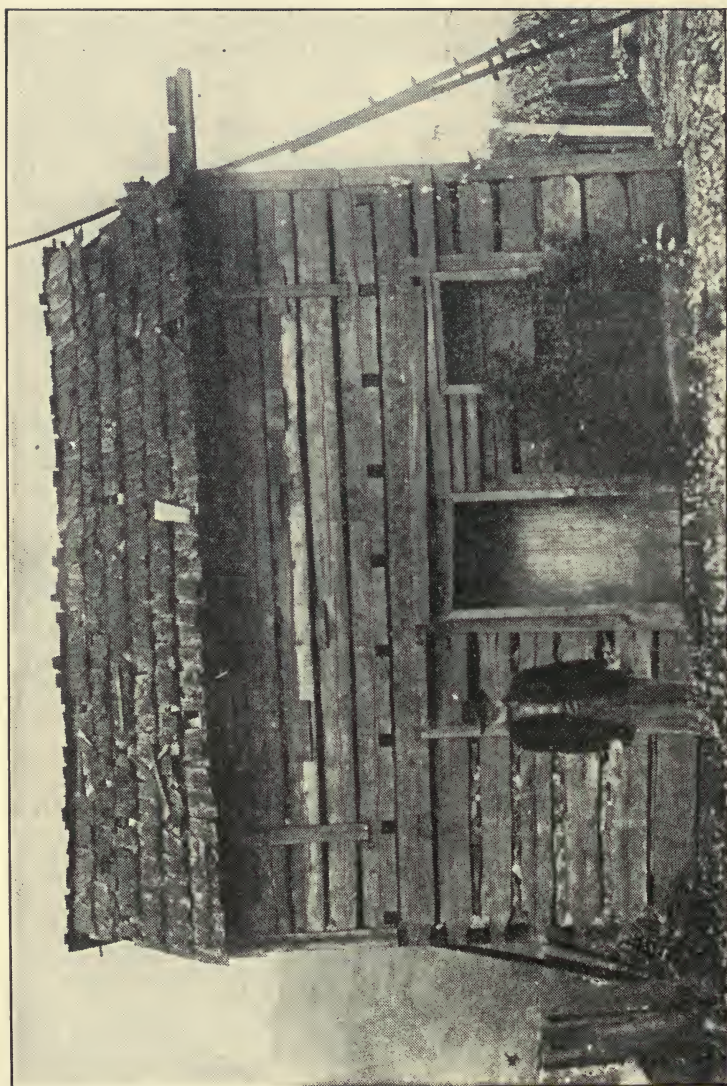
R. Monroe Fields was born on the head of King's Creek at the foot of the Laurel Mountains. He never was in college, but got what education he has in a very homely schoolhouse. He was granted law license to practice law when he was eighteen years old. Mr. Fields' first case was a very funny case. William McIntire, merchant at the mouth of Rockhouse, had sued Andy Crase for \$300 for store account. When the case was called Mr. Fields stated to the court that you could not bring a suit in a magistrate's court over \$200, so Mr. McIntire agreed to knock off one hundred dollars. Mr. Fields claimed that he had paid the account in full and also claimed limitation on all the account except ten cents' worth of horseshoe nails which had been bought inside of two years. Mr. Fields showed the court where an account was over two years old you could not bring suit, and so Mr. Dixon, the magistrate, took Mr. McIntire out and read him the law and he agreed to knock off the other \$200, as he did not want to get stuck for the costs, and he agreed to law it out for the ten cents' worth of horseshoe nails. A jury was called and the court began to take the proof. The case lasted something like two hours. The case got very hot. Both parties accused each other of swearing lies and the court threatened to fine them if they did not hush up that talk. So finally the case was finished and both sides of the case was argued on. One side was argued on by Mr. Fields and the other by Mr. McIntire, an uneducated merchant.



After the argument was over the instructions were given the jury, and after being out about one hour the jury came in and reported that they could not agree. The court then sent them back in the jury room the second time to make a verdict, if possible. After something about one-half an hour they reported the second time that they could not agree, so the court sent them back the third time and asked them, if possible, to agree. They were out this time only about fifteen minutes and reported that they could not agree, as there were only three and three. So the jury was dismissed and both sides agreed to pay his part of the costs and the suit to be settled, which was agreed upon. So Mr. Fields won his case for his client, Mr. Crase, and received his five (\$5) dollar fee out of a ten-cent suit for horseshoe nails.

Since that time Mr. Fields has won some very large cases in different Circuit Courts and the Government courts and has been elected once County Attorney and twice Commonwealth's Attorney of the Thirty-fifth Judicial District of Letcher County, which was cut off of Perry County.

The first County Judge was Nat Collins, son of Jim Collins, and a very strong preacher, who came here in 1806 from North Carolina and was making his way for the Bluegrass section. There were eight men and women and Preacher Collins led the bunch. They had come by the way of Cumberland Gap and did not know how to get across the Stone Mountain into the Bluegrass region. There was no Cumberland Gap tunnel then or any railroads, only a wild wilderness. The bunch came up Powell's River to where Wise, Va., is now, and struck out through the Pound Gap



UNCLE NATHANIEL COLLINS  
Letcher County's first judge and court house

and on to the head of Kentucky River and down the river to where Whitesburg is now located. There was not a family living in Letcher County then, as Daniel Boone had left his camp at the mouth of Boone's Fork and went to the fort at Boonesborough, so they passed through where Whitesburg now is and up Sandlick Creek and over a hill on to Camp Branch. It was just before Christmas and they all went up a small dreen under a cliff and laid out. The next morning the snow was six feet deep and they were all covered with snow. The snow lasted about three months, so they lay up all winter and the men would kill deer and wildturkey and they all had a very good time camping out.

The next spring Jim Collins settled at the mouth of Camp Branch, known as Colson, Ky. His son, Nat Collins, was Letcher County's first County Judge, and Judge Nat Collins had a son named Madison Collins, Jr., who died at Colson, Ky., a year ago at a ripe old age.

Old Judge Nat Collins is a great-great-grandfather of our present County Judge, Sam Collins. Old Judge Nat Collins was a great man during his day. He represented twenty mountain counties in Congress and in the Senate.

Stephen Hogg, a great-uncle of my mother, was the first Sheriff of Letcher County. Hiram Hogg donated ten acres of land to the county where Whitesburg now stands to build the courthouse and jail, to draw the town back down the river one mile from where Judge Nat Collins held his court, which was held in one of the old mountain log cabins built by the old settlers in 1806-1807-1808.





JUDGE SAM COLLINS  
January 1st, 1918-22



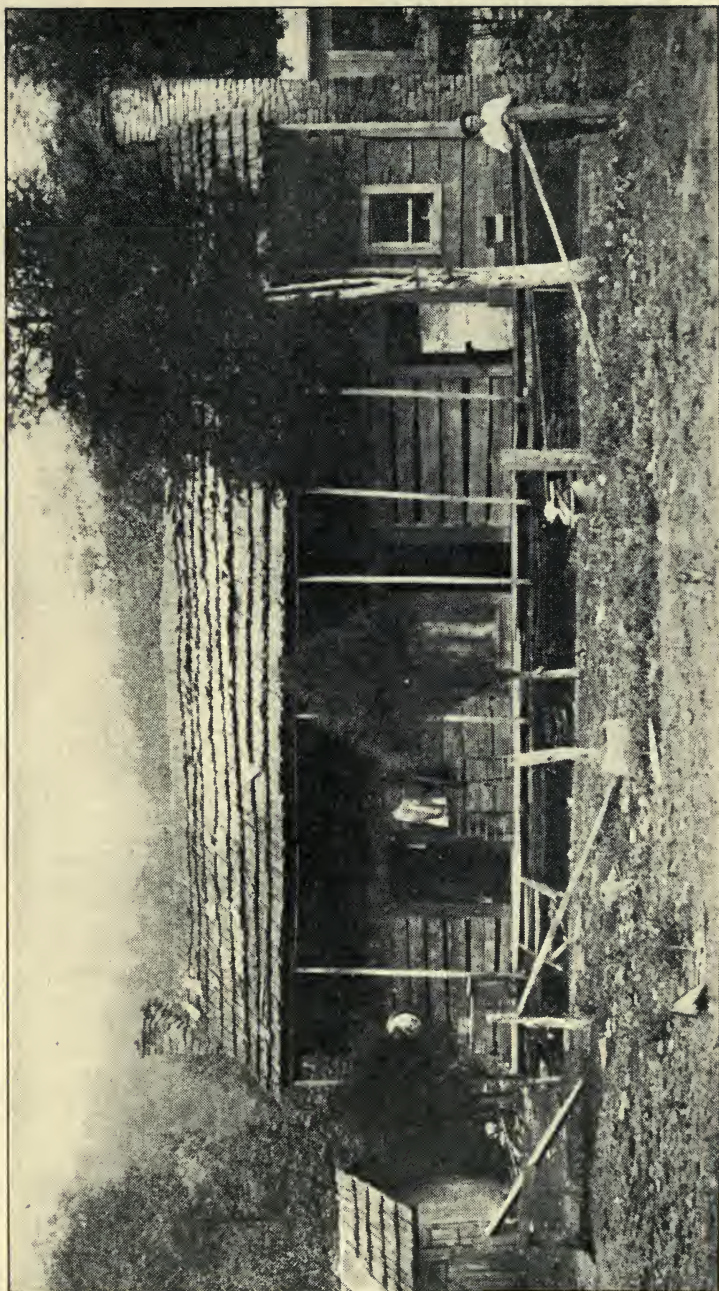
LETCHER COUNTY COURT HOUSE, BUILT 1898

After Letcher was cut off from Perry and made a county, Hiram Hogg was the first representative of Letcher County to be sent to the State Capitol as a lawmaker. Letcher County's present courthouse was built in 1898. We have a beautiful courthouse and square. Our present County Judge is young Sam Collins, who has done more for Letcher County in the way of morals and bringing old Letcher to the front than any man in the county. He was Deputy Collector and Commissioner for years and he sure put the moonshiners out of Letcher County, and since he has been Judge he has sure put the whisky out of the county. I went in office the same day he did and there were thirty-seven prisoners turned over to me by ex-Jailer Bill Hall. Judge Collins kept me a good bunch of boarders, as many as eight moonshiners per day, until he proved to them and to the people of Letcher County that moonshining could not be carried on in Letcher County as long as he was County Judge, and by his noted work he has cut my boarding house down only to two prisoners.

He is doing lots for Letcher County and is spending lots of money on the county roads. That is the kind of a Judge we need during this awful war for freedom. He is always sure he is right and then goes ahead.

I will try and describe the log house that my poor old widowed mother worked so hard to keep us and to raise and educate her eight children. We are all pleased to know that we had a mother who could see the future as she did. Her great ambition was to educate us and then we could be some use to her and to the world. The time has come that unless you have an education you are left out.





### THE OLD WHITAKER HOME

The author now stands where his mother whipped him with a switch from the cedar tree at his right

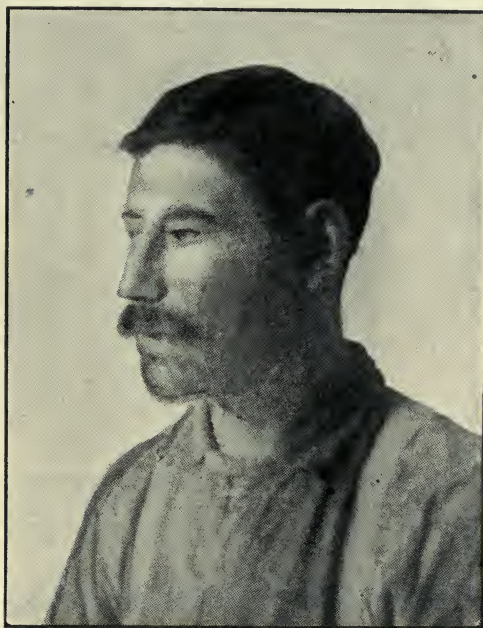
The house is made out of two double log rooms, sixteen by eighteen feet. The rooms are eight by sixteen feet. The logs are hewed and the cracks were daubed with mud, but you will notice the mud has all about fell out of the cracks and nobody there to help mother put it back, as all of the children are married and gone from the old home. You will notice the hand-split boards, or shingles, made with a frow and hand mall. You will also notice the old-fashioned chimney. This dear old typical Kentucky mountain log house is where I spent my best boyhood days. There is nothing like Mother and Home. You will notice the author in the front yard near the cedar tree, where my dear old mother cut the switches and gave me such a whipping and put long division running through my brain that has caused me to be a man.

One room has a window in it. This we all called the lower room. That was the room in which I gave my mother and four brothers the money that I worked out for them at Stonega. My mother sometimes has nightmares in her sleep, and Dr. Gid Whitaker, of Whitesburg, Ky., has the same thing sometimes. After we all got grown our sister, Julia, came home on a visit from 'Texas and we all would sit up and talked until about 11 o'clock in the night and then we all went to bed, and this is the way we slept:

My wife and I in the lower room, Dr. Little and wife also in the same room, and Dr. Gid and his wife in one bed, mother and Jessie, daughter of Julia, in one bed, and Julia in the other bed. All three of the last beds were in the upper room. So about 2 o'clock Dr. Gid got to dreaming about getting his head hung



in the iron bed at the head of the bed and it turned into a nightmare. And Dr. Gid began hollowing, "Oh, ma!" and his wife nailed him by his nightshirt and about that time Dr. Little nailed him and they turned the table over and broke up all of the dishes, and by that time mother and Julia were scared to

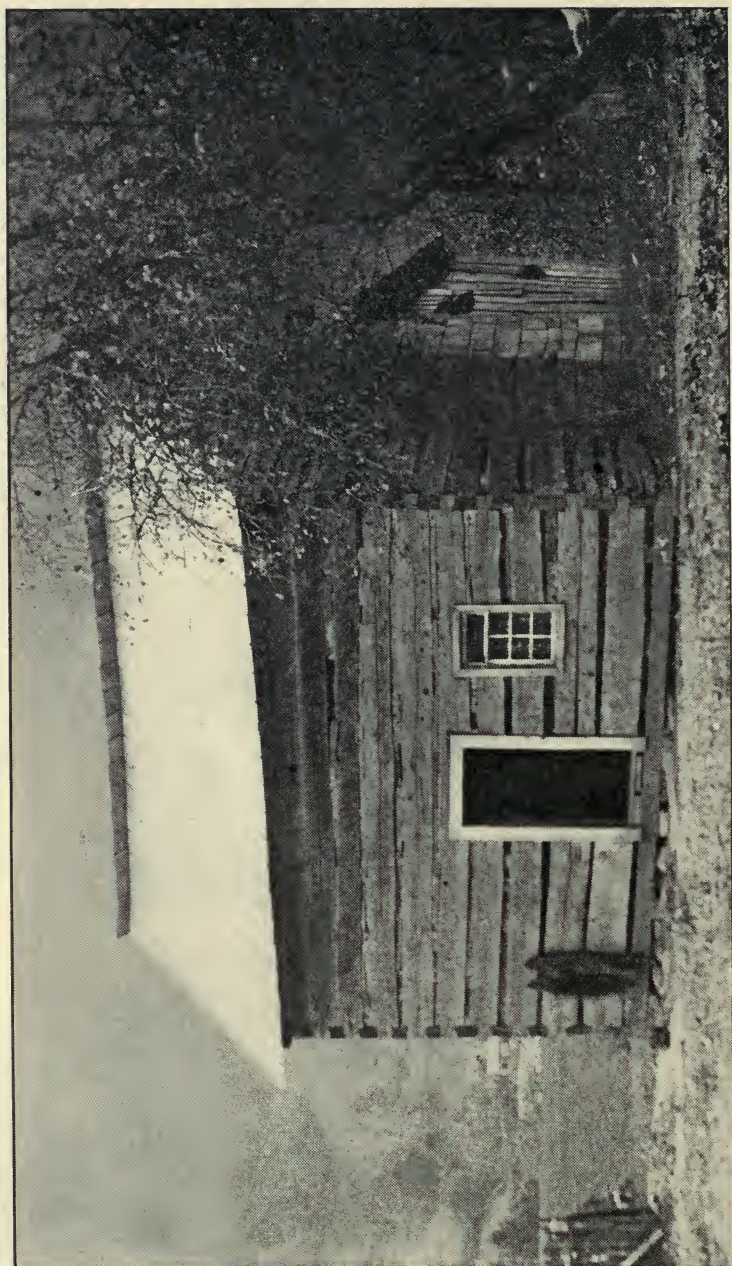


JOHN COMBS BARLOW  
Letcher County's last fugitive

death, and finally I got to him and got him quiet. After the scare got off of us all we had a good laugh and never did go back to bed again that night. And Julia said that she did not want to see any more nightmares.

There is but one mountain fugitive left. The above picture is the likeness of John Combs Barlow, one of the men I caught thirteen years ago on the head of





Where the Bransons were killed in the Civil War. Three grandsons now in France

Island Branch. Up until yet he is still an outlaw. I now have him in my jail under an indictment for an awful crime. When the Commonwealth gets through with him he will be quiet and a good, law-abiding citizen.

In the time of the Civil War there was only one real battle fought in Letcher County. It was fought on Crase's Branch, one and one-half miles from the mouth of Rockhouse. The rebels had gathered at Branson's up in a big flat about one-fourth of a mile up on the branch. They had taken refuge in an old typical Kentucky mountain log cabin with only one door and one chimney. They had prepared in that cabin to fight until the end, like Colonel Travis and Crockett did in the Alamo. The reader will take notice of the bullet holes in the old log house around the window and the door.

This house was built in 1849, but the old roof has all decayed and has been covered again with galvanized roofing, but the old mud chimney and the log walls are just the same.

The following picture is Sheriff James Tolliver and the moonshine still that was raided by Judge Sam Collins and Sheriff Jim Tolliver on September 15, 1918. It was found on the head of Bottom Fork, tributary to the north fork of the Kentucky River, which empties in at Mayking, Ky. The still is a fifty-gallon still. It was a fine outfit, five big hedges of beer and a real big trough cut out in a big tree which had fallen to slop the hogs in.



Sheriff Tolliver is doing some real good work as a Sheriff. He and his deputy sure have put the moonshiners to running.



**SHERIFF J. D. TOLLIVER**  
With a captured still

I want to say that the people of Letcher County were the worst surprised set of people that ever was when the Negroes, Italians, Dagoes, dump carts and mules and horses began to pull into Whitesburg from Stonega and Appalachia, Va., in 1910 to begin



work on the L. & N. Railroad, which was a new construction from Jackson to McRoberts, to the greatest coal fields in the world. The railroad right of way had been surveyed many times, but the good old citizens never thought it could be built, and finally they got a bunch of men to get the right of way, which the biggest part of the citizens had signed up for \$50 per acre. So it was good for one year, and finally the contract was let to build the road, and then here came the people.

There were no colored people in Letcher County or any foreign immigrants of any kind, and when they began to drop in like birds the good old citizens did not know what was going to happen. In the month of November, when the trees were shedding their leaves and going back to dust like we all will some time, there came an awful and terrible roaring up the dear old Kentucky River in Letcher County, and what could it be only Conductor Spot Combs on the first train that ever was run into Letcher County. It was a work train laying the first steel into the county. It was on Friday and the news went all over the county just like wildfire. So there was a large bridge to be set in south of Ulvah the following Sunday and I believe there were three thousand people gathered to see the train come to set in the bridge. They had rode horseback and in wagons, which were pulled by the old-fashioned oxen, and lots of old people in sleds. They had brought horse feed and grub for themselves. They were all sitting around the bridge, scattered upon the hill under the beech trees and ivy and laurel, and about 10:50 the work train came. She was making speed at the rate of about five miles per hour, and when the engine blew

for the bridge the old women threw their pipes down and started to run, also many of the twenty-year-old men did the same thing. The biggest part of the horses got scared and run away, some in wagons and some in sleds. I believe that was the biggest day I ever saw in Letcher County. A train is an old thing now. I can only call to my memory two people who have never seen a train or rode on one, and they live in about five miles of Blackey, and they don't want to see or ride on it.

There have been many changes in Letcher County since 1911. It doesn't seem like the same country. So many new towns, people and coal companies. We have about twenty through freights daily and two locals and four passengers, except on Sundays, and since the war we have only had two passenger trains, for the purpose of saving coal. We have splendid passenger service and have some of the kindest and jolliest passenger conductors in the whole country, such as Spot Combs, who was born at Jackson, Breathitt County.

Spot has a big heart and you will always find him right. Next is Conductor Bradshaw, who has always been all right, but he is pretty fat to get about. He has only one son-in-law, Dick Davis, who can get about for him, and Dick says, "A man who has a father-in-law and can't use him just as well as have no father-in-law." Next is Conductor Atcherson, who is just a dandy. He is a slim fellow and can see anything that happens on his train. Then comes a small fellow with a few freckles on his face and a nice railroad smile, who is ready to change any time if required to and can suit anybody. They call him Conductor Bocook.

I will say with nine years of railroad experience they don't make any nicer conductors than the ones whom I have just wrote about. Then just think of that bunch of extra passenger conductors, Hop Daniels, who has a heart as big as a groundhog and he does his work just like Gen. Pershing does his job. Then comes Conductor Short, and he is just as fat as he is "Short." He can't get around with that extra smile on like Hop, but Short can get over the road. Then comes Conductor Tommie Hammons. He doesn't say very much of anything to anybody. All he does is just look at his time card from the time he leaves Lexington until he gets to McRoberts, and when the time card is due at McRoberts Conductor Hammons is there "Johnnie on the spot" with his train. We have another conductor who is off of the L. & A. and holds his seniority over some of the boys. The traveling public say they can tell just as soon as they see the engine when Conductor Ills is on, as the engine begins to pop off; they will know Conductor Ills will pop next. As to the engineers on passengers, they are the best, and the flagmen are just a nice set of young boys.

There are only a very few more of the good old-fashioned grandmas left in Eastern Kentucky who hold onto the old-fashioned clothes with a large pocket tied to their hip to carry their old-fashioned pipe.

In the above picture is old Grandmother Hughes. She was Cleburn Hicks' daughter, of Russell County, Virginia, and came to Kentucky in the year of 1866 and was married to Mr. Hughes by David Calhoun. Grandma Hughes is now eighty-nine years old and



washes every day and by hard work has saved up over \$100 and has it in the First National Bank of Whitesburg, Ky., to take care of her when she gets so old she can't work. Grandma Hughes joined the



**FRANKIE HUGHES**  
Grandmother of all

old Regular Baptist Church at the age of twenty-three years and has kept the faith ever since. Everybody, old and young, loves her.

I am going to close my book very soon and I want to present to the public a small picture of my four brothers, whom I helped to educate. The first two

are Gid and Jim at the age of nine and seven. Gid is sitting down and Jim standing. They are dressed up. They are barefooted, have home-made pants and shirts. You can see from the picture the way their hair looked and tell how often they got it cut.

This tintype picture was made twenty-four years ago. My idea is to show the boys' pictures in real life when they lived in a country undeveloped, no railroads, no business of any kind, and then I will show them after they have been educated and through college. Both city and country life and Letcher County have grown in refinement and development and good morals and in language schools and religion, as the two pictures show.

The first picture is Dr. Gid Whitaker, of Whitesburg, Ky., who is a successful doctor and business man. This picture was taken twenty-four years after the first. The second picture is Jim Whitaker, wholesale feed man, of Blackey, Ky., and pastor of the Indian Bottom Church, the oldest church in Letcher County, which was founded by James Dixon.

I will now present to you a tintype picture of Little and Less, taken the same time. You can see very plainly how mother made their pants and shirts twenty-four years ago. I now furnish you the picture of Dr. Little Whitaker, of Blackey, Ky., who is a successful doctor and coal man. Less, when a boy, had the asthma, and mother sent him West, where he was cured. I will present to you the photo of Less Whitaker, who is Assessor and Tax Collector of Potter County, Texas, on the Democratic ticket and a real successful oil man in Oklahoma.



**DR. GID WHITAKER**  
Graduate 1912





DR. LITTLE WHITAKER  
Graduate 1912



The author and his family on their way to Whitesburg to take charge of the county jail



I now present to you the picture of my family on our way from Blackey to Whitesburg on muleback to take charge of the county jail. You will notice that my wife is leading the mule and my four children and a cousin to my wife, who made her home with us, are riding on the mule and can see very plainly the Jailer pushing the old mule along. My wife thinks this was the best way of getting to Whitesburg and she knew it was the safest way. We sure had a splendid trip over the land. I did not want to go over the land on muleback and push a mule that far, but my wife said that it would be all right, that I would soon get used to pushing the prisoners up the stairs and just as well fall in line now and learn how to push.

My wife's cousin is now married to F. F. Pendleton, who is time and bookkeeper for the Smoot Creek Coal Company at Dalna, Ky.



## SKETCH OF WORK AND WORDS OF WOODROW WILSON.

### Opening Statement.

**N**O BOOK is hardly complete in the year 1918 without some part of it bearing on the great



PRESIDENT WOODROW WILSON

world war. It seems perfectly proper to give a few pages here to that subject in which all readers are of a right so much interested.

The writer of this book claims to be as loyal as any citizen of the United States to the great Government which is waging war with all its might on the enemies of liberty. He claims to live in a section of the country where all the people have always felt the same way, and who are now doing a noble part in this nation's biggest task. Letcher County's hundreds of young men sent to the colors with not a word

of murmur from its citizens; her heavy oversubscription of every quota of every war loan and charitable enterprise connected with the war; her great contribution to the war industries of the nation through her millions of tons of "black diamonds," and the keen interest shown in every phase of the war in every part of the county—all these things go to prove that the people who will read this book are as loyal as any and will be glad to have something about the war, along with the other things, funny and serious, which are offered.

When people in every part of the country are doing so much to carry on the gigantic enterprise of the war it is but natural that they should ask, if not aloud, then deep down in themselves, the reason for it all. Why must the war go on, calling for the sacrifice of the lives of many in every community, and added burdens of taxes, war loans and high prices of everything used. This is the most natural of questions and will be asked countless times the coming winter and spring and summer.

The writer of this book thinks the answer can be found in the Work and Words of President Woodrow Wilson. Therefore he takes the space and trouble to offer in these pages the facts and statements which sum up the matter, as he sees it.

### **Main Facts in Life of Woodrow Wilson.**

Woodrow Wilson was born sixty-two years ago at Staunton, Va. He came of fine old Virginia stock, the same kind which came across the mountains into Kentucky seventy-five years earlier.

His early life was not greatly different from that of many others of the same class of people who were well enough off to give their children a good education. The people among whom he lived were cultured and had high ideals of life, so that he got a good education, graduating at the age of twenty-three from Princeton College, one of the leading schools of the country. His opportunities were good and he took advantage of them by getting an education as good as the land afforded.

Being of a studious turn of mind, he pursued his studies further after his graduation at the leading universities of the section, specializing in the study of law, the science of government and the great principles by which man lives with his fellow man: Here was the foundation work on which Woodrow Wilson rose to being the leading citizen of the world forty years later.

In the years 1882 and 1883 he began the practice of law in Atlanta, Ga. But the field was too narrow and he soon realized that he was by nature a scholar and interested in broader fields than the practicing of the profession which had led to the careers of nearly all the great statesmen up to that time. In the period embracing the next twenty years, until he was well up in the forties, his time was spent as a teacher, author of histories and books on government and as a profound student of American affairs.



By this time he was recognized as one of the leading educators of the whole country and as an authority on the history and theory of government of America, the leading republic of the world. He was chosen head of Princeton University in 1902, in which position he remained until 1910, following in general the same lines of work and adding further to his reputation as an authority on state affairs.

Only a few years ago, even since 1900, it seemed that our Government was falling more and more into the hands of the politicians, and that the great educators of the land were missing the mark, so far as their work concerned practical things. Men like Woodrow Wilson at Princeton University were thought all right as school men and authors, but too flighty and theoretical for governmental affairs. Now that is all changed in America, and the story of Woodrow Wilson's entry into public life and his undisputed success is the story of that change.

In the years before 1910 the State of New Jersey was generally known as the home of corrupt politics and of rich corporations which wished to escape the law for their evil practices. For a long time the Republican party had been in charge of affairs. With the hope of winning the State election the Democrats nominated Professor Wilson, not because they wanted him especially, but because it would appeal to the people strongly to vote for a man who was not a politician and against whom not a word could be said. Though New Jersey is normally Republican by some thousands of votes, Wilson was elected, and the experiment of having a man with no political experience in the highest office of the State was on.

All the Nation watched to see what would happen,—whether the professor's bookish ideas would work out in a State where there were many great problems for the Governor to deal with. By the hardest kind of work and most careful treatment of each of the problems which came up for settlement, fitting each to great principles which were worked out years before, he made a record which the people of his State and the people of the whole country generally decided was good. It was granted that the Wilson ideas would work—in a State.

The spring of 1912 brought the campaigns for nominations for President. There was the big contest in the Republican party between President Taft and ex-President Roosevelt, representing the "Stand Pat" and "Progressive" wings, respectively. At the National Convention Taft was nominated, bringing the split, when Roosevelt and his followers drew apart and founded a new party.

When the Democratic convention came on a good campaign had been made for the nomination of Wilson, but he lacked some hundreds of sufficient delegates to nominate. Then followed a long deadlock in the voting, no candidate having enough votes to nominate him. William Jennings Bryan turned the tide at the critical moment, contending that the party must nominate a man unmistakably progressive in his ideas, or be defeated by Roosevelt in November. The Democrats were hardly willing to offer the Professor to the Nation, whatever his record in New Jersey, and besides there were strong elements in the party bitterly opposed to Wilson or any other man known as a reformer and progressive. But there

seemed nothing else to do, and Bryan's advice prevailed—Wilson was offered to the Nation, with just two years of actual experience in governmental affairs, that in a small State! It was a thing hardly to be believed, without parallel in American history!

The election of Woodrow Wilson was easy, because of his getting more votes than either Taft or Roosevelt in most of the States, though he lacked more than a million of getting half the popular votes. His electoral majority was greater than that received by a President since Monroe.

Everyone is familiar with the events in the life of Woodrow Wilson since he was elected President in 1912, and only the matters of greatest importance in bringing him into the position of head of the affairs of the world will be mentioned briefly under the next head.

### **Woodrow Wilson as President.**

In practice the Government of the United States is run by the party in power, and in theory the President of the United States is the head of the majority party. Such being the facts, it is the first task of a new President to line up the support of his own party. The only other Democratic President since the Civil War had failed utterly in this respect and made a poorer record than the real ability of the man led the people to expect.

Many people wondered if Wilson could control the discordant elements in his own party after he took office, or if he would fail right at the beginning, as did Cleveland. But the doubters did not have to wait long. Wilson's study of our system of govern-



ment taught him that the President of the United States is the head of the party which elects him, just as much as he is President, and that all other loyal members of that party must support him on matters to which the party is pledged, whether it suits the particular tastes of any individual officer or not. He was careful to make it clear at the very beginning that the will of the people as expressed in the election of 1912 should be attained through the Democratic party, then in power, and that he would carry the case of any man who withheld his support in making good those pledges back to his own people.

Wilson declared that the Constitution made him the head of the executive department of the Government, but that through the practical working out of our governmental system he was responsible for the acts of the legislative branch also, as the head of the party in power. In that sense he was the head of the legislative as well as the executive department. From the day he took office and called Congress into special session to revise the tariff he has taken a leading part in all legislation. It has become almost a proverb in this country now to speak of him as the schoolmaster holding the rod over the heads of the school of Congress.

His first experience is typical of all the others in dealing with Congress. The Democrats were pledged to reduce the tariff to the basis of producing revenue only. But when Congress started working each member figured only for the direct interests of himself and his little district, and there followed the endless little bargains and swapping of support, the old "log-rolling" business. It was the same thing which

happened under Taft in 1909, when the Republicans, pledged to lower the tariff, actually raised it by trying to listen to the pleas of each interest which wanted a particular item raised. Wilson called a halt. He said each Democrat must work to lower the whole tariff to the basis promised the people, which could not be done if each fellow held to his own pet schedule, and that if they did not follow his advice the name of each Congressman who was to blame for the failure should be made known to the remotest nook of the country. It worked; nearly all opposition passed away, and a fairly satisfactory downward revision was finally made. The Democrats who opposed Wilson to the end are now occupying positions in private life.

It was so with the money legislation, railroad regulation, the trust problem and all the other many problems which came up under Wilson's first Congress, so that when the two years were over a real attempt had been made to enact laws covering every pledge in 1912. To this day there has been only one failure to have a recommendation of Woodrow Wilson enacted into law, that the submission of the woman suffrage amendment, by the narrowest of margins; and even that will probably be passed before this book is read. It is a record for getting laws passed that no other President, not even Roosevelt, has equaled.

At the beginning of Wilson's administration the vexing problem of Mexico, then in a state of revolution and anarchy, was a big problem. Wilson did not follow the advice of those who wanted to annex Mexico, nor of the others who said we must keep our

hands strictly off. He took the position that the United States must deal with the problem or the European nations would, but held that Mexico should be allowed to work out her own affairs as far as possible. He proposed that friendly help of the great nation just to the north be extended, and even proper chastisement if she did not respect our rights and property on the border, but that we should take the smallest actual part in Mexican affairs to protect our own interests and insure respect for our efforts by other interested nations. For the rest he adopted the plan of waiting for Mexico to act, thereby gaining for his policy the name, well known at the time, of "watchful waiting." Time has shown the wisdom of that policy, even if we did have to send a military and naval expedition into Mexico and still have to keep a guard on the border, while Mexico herself brings order out of her confusion.

The problems referred to briefly in the above paragraphs were enough to make a full program for a President, but with the breaking of the world war in Europe in 1914, all American questions became more or less connected, for every nation of the world in the Twentieth Century is pretty closely connected with every other. The question with us in the autumn of 1914 was how to carry on our affairs and not become involved in the war, which we looked upon as belonging to Europe. This was Wilson's problem as the head of a great peace-loving nation.

Again our leader lived up to his policy of avoiding international entanglements so much that his "watchful waiting" reputation grew. He insisted that the warring nation should fully respect our



rights as the most powerful neutral nation, and sent endless notes, messages and reasonable demands to both Great Britain and Germany. Often the results were slow to appear, but always the offender made full satisfaction. Most of the people of the United States came to believe that Wilson could go on seeing that we got our rights and still keep us out of the war. This was through the years 1914, 1915 and 1916.

One incident, the sinking of the British steamer *Lusitania* in May, 1915, with many prominent American citizens lost, came nearest to upsetting the peace program. But Germany apologized, promised to make amends and changed her policy toward us for the rest of 1915 and 1916. Many people of America thought we should go to war at once when this vessel was sunk on the high seas, but Wilson and the majority decided it was better to wait. We have no way to know how Wilson really felt about the matter at the time, but time has shown that the American people were not ready to go into the great war at that time, and as the leader of the Nation it would have been folly for him to force us in. Democratic nations do not make war so.

The election of 1916 came on. Wilson was the proven leader of the Democrats and was given the nomination by acclamation in the most harmonious convention the party ever held, for he was the candidate and the mold of the issues at the same time. The breach in the Republican party was partially bridged over and Justice Hughes was chosen to oppose Wilson. The two issues in the campaign became Wilson's record and the attitude toward the

great war. Not much could be made of the opposition in attacking Wilson's home-affairs record, and the main issue became the war question. In the light of the prominent part Wilson is now taking in the pushing of the world's greatest war, it seems strange that he was regarded as a pacifist just two years ago. But such was the case. Probably enough people believed he would and could keep us out of the war to elect him. On the other hand there were the many who saw no chance for us to keep out and were afraid of him as a war leader.

But as Woodrow Wilson was great as leader of a peaceful nation while neutral, so when America became a belligerent he became at once the foremost of war statesmen. No greater tribute could be paid him than to say he has been the voice of over a hundred million people both in peace, and when peace was no longer endurable, in making war.

When Germany announced her unlimited submarine war the last of January, 1917, on neutrals and enemies alike, it was plain that she no longer respected our rights, but was bent on conquering the world, including America, by her brute force. The patience of America was exhausted and she aroused from her peace sleep. Woodrow Wilson, their chosen leader, must have felt the insult and threat more deeply than the rest, for had he not labored to his utmost for two and a half long years to avoid the war for America? It is true he went steadily on with his diplomatic moves to do what he could, but to Wilson and America it was plain, from the day the submarines went on the high seas to kill guilty and innocent alike and the German Minister at Wash-

ington was sent home, that it was only a matter of weeks until we would be one of a set of peace-loving nations in a war-mad world striking blows for ourselves when other means had failed.

As America was the greatest force in the world not already in the war, the nations allied against Germany welcomed her to them in their time of great need. As the leader of America Wilson was given the opportunity to stand with the highest in Allied councils. But his record in America had already marked him as one of the ablest men in the world, and he was not long in proving he measured up to the best in Europe. Almost from the day he entered the war Wilson has been the spokesman for the Allied world. He speaks and they approve, because he speaks the essence of democracy and freedom for which the world is fighting. His voice is the loudest in the world!

We are coming now to the purpose of this sketch, to answer the real questioning of the average American citizen, particularly of the mountains of Kentucky, about the great war, in the words of President Wilson. From this sketch we can see how he as a student of men and governments rose to the highest success in American affairs. The American ideal of government, a government of the people, is about to become the ideal of the civilized world. The words of Woodrow Wilson about the war and its purposes, as the spokesman for the civilized world and a product of democracy, will make clear what it is all about and what we are to get in return for our sacrifices.



Several selections from his war utterances, with a few notes of explanation of time and circumstances, will follow in the next division.

### **Extracts From Wilson's War Speeches.**

There were many strong statements by President Wilson before the war began defining America's position and the aims she held dear. For lack of space we do not give any of them here, but come to the more striking ones after the war began.

In the light of what has taken place we know now that it was never possible for America to stay permanently out of the world war, and perhaps no one knew this better than our President. But he and we hoped that while we were at peace we might remain peaceful, not in any sense dodging our duty if national honor called us. It should be "peace at any price, except the price of dishonor."

But when it became clear beyond a doubt that we must go to war with the enemy of freedom and civilization, President Wilson called Congress into special session and told them in no uncertain terms that we must take the step. He was no longer a pacifist at the head of a peaceful people, but the commander-in-chief of an aroused and militant American manhood. The closing paragraph of his address to Congress, April 2, 1917, ranks with the best oratory of the world, yet states America's position. It follows:

"It is a fearful thing to lead this great peaceful people into war, into the most terrible and disastrous of all wars, civilization itself seeming to be in the balance. But the right is more precious than peace, and

we shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts—for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own governments—for the rights and liberties of small nations, for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free. To such a task we can dedicate our lives and fortunes, everything that we are and everything that we have, with the pride of those who know that the day has come when America is privileged to spend her blood and her might for the principles that gave her birth and happiness and the peace which she has treasured. God helping her, she can do no other."

Perhaps there are those who think we still might have remained neutral by humbling ourselves a little, which would have been better than the awful destruction of the war, by acting as some of the small nations of Europe have acted, we might have kept out. Perhaps we might have withdrawn our ships from the high seas, which belong as much to us as to any nation, and kept all our citizens at home, thus avoiding the war. This is the rallying ground of all the pacifists.

To do so would have taken the strongest nation of the world out of any part in the affairs of the world, which is preposterous on the face of it. Then as surely as Germany conquered France and Great Britain, which now seems must have taken place in 1918 but for the help of America, she would have taken charge of our helpless and peaceful country as the greatest reservoir of wealth and raw material in

the world. For Germany was determined to conquer the world—let there be no mistake about that. As we went to the war for the principles we held dear, so we had to meet Germany with a force greater than her own, the only thing under the sun that could stop that war-mad nation, bent on conquest. Hear President Wilson on this point in his speech launching the Third Liberty Loan at Baltimore, April 6, 1918, for no one has put the point stronger than he:

“I accept Germany’s challenge. I know that you accept it. All the world shall know that you accept it. It shall appear in the utter sacrifice and self-forgetfulness with which we shall give all that we love and all that we have to redeem the world and make it fit for free men like ourselves to live in. This now is the meaning of all that we do. Let everything that we say, my fellow-countrymen, everything that we henceforth plan and accomplish, ring true to this response till the majesty and might of our concerted power shall fill the thought and utterly defeat the force of those who flout and misprize what we honor and hold dear. Germany has said that force, and force alone, shall decide whether justice and peace shall reign in the affairs of men, whether Right as America conceives it or Dominion as she conceives it shall determine the destinies of mankind. There is, therefore, but one response possible from us: Force, force to the utmost, force without stint or limit, the righteous and triumphant force which shall make Right the law of the world and cast every selfish dominion down in the dust.”

But it is well to state the precise aims for which we are fighting, and the satisfaction of which would



bring peace from us. In general we are fighting for the American principles of freedom and justice and are combating Germany's force with greater force as a means of self-protection. But there is the bigger program of applying these principles to world affairs, so that all nations and peoples shall be free and live in peace after the war is over forever. But the case can be stated more precisely than this.

As the spokesman for the nations allied against Germany, President Wilson announced fourteen terms on which we would be willing to make peace last winter. Six of them have to do with general conditions which will apply to all nations alike: freedom of the seas, reduction of armies, open treaties, equal trade conditions for all nations, colonial claims, and a league to enforce peace and settle disputes between nations. The other eight provide for changes in boundaries or governments, one or both, in France, Belgium, Italy, Germany, Austria, Turkey, Russia, Poland, and the Balkan States on a basis of freedom and justice to the people of each country. It is the program on which peace will finally be made and guarantees that the "world will be made safe for democracy." The program is too long to state here in its original form.

Many times later Wilson has made further statements bearing on our war aims. Some of these statements are brief and clear enough to be put down here, since they are another way of stating the fourteen peace conditions. In addressing Congress February 11, 1918, the President said they could be put under four heads, as follows:

“First—Each part of the final settlement must be based upon essential justice to bring a permanent peace.

“Second—Peoples and provinces are not to be bartered about like chattels to establish a balance of power.

“Third—Territorial settlements must be for the benefit of the peoples concerned and not for the adjustment of rival States’ claims.

“Fourth—Well-defined national aspirations must be accorded the utmost satisfaction.”

At no time has the President made a finer statement of the issues involved in the war than in his speech of September 27, 1918, in opening the Fourth Liberty Loan at New York. It must be quoted somewhat at length, with the idea that it is a further definition and application of the fourteen terms of peace. It can best be given in Wilson’s own words:

“We accept the issues of the war as facts, not as any group of men here or elsewhere has defined them, and we cannot accept any outcome which does not squarely meet and settle them. The issues are these:

“‘Shall the military power of any nation or group of nations be suffered to determine the fortunes of peoples over whom they have no right to rule, except the right of force?

“‘Shall strong nations be free to wrong weak nations and make them subject to their purpose and interest?

“‘Shall peoples be ruled and dominated, even in their own internal affairs, by arbitrary and irresponsible force or by their own will and choice?

“ ‘Shall there be a common standard of right and privilege for all peoples and nations, or shall the strong do as they will and the weak suffer without redress?’

“ ‘Shall the assertion of right be haphazard and by casual alliance, or shall there be a common concert to oblige the observance of common rights?’

“ ‘But these general terms do not disclose the whole matter. Some details are needed to make them sound less like a thesis and more like a practical program. These, then, are some of the particulars, and I state them with greater confidence because I can state them authoritatively as representing this Government’s interpretation of its own duty with regard to peace:

“ ‘First—The impartial justice meted out must involve no discrimination. It must be a justice that plays no favorites and knows no standard but the equal rights of all the peoples concerned.

“ ‘Second—No special or separate interest of any single nation or any group of nations can be made a basis of any part of the settlement which is not consistent with the common interests of all.

“ ‘Third—There shall be no leagues or alliance or special covenants and understandings with the general and common family of the league of nations.

“ ‘Fourth—There shall be no special, selfish combinations in the league, except as penalty by exclusion from the markets of the world may be vested in the league of nations itself, as a means of discipline and control.



“‘Fifth—All international treaties and agreements of any kind must be made known, in their entirety, to the rest of the world.’”

President Wilson has repeatedly laid emphasis on the statement that this is a war of the people for universal human rights, as much as a war of nations for national ends. Notice this extract from the same September 27, 1918, address at New York:

“This war has positive and well-defined purposes which we did not determine and which we cannot alter. No statesman or assembly created them; no statesman or assembly can alter them. They have arisen out of the very nature and circumstances of the war. The most that statesmen or assemblies can do is to carry them out or be false to them. They were perhaps not clear at the outset, but they are clear now.

“The war has lasted more than four years and the world has been drawn into it. The common will of mankind has been substituted for the particular purposes of individual States. Individual statesmen may have started the conflict, but neither they nor their opponents can stop it as they please. It has become a people’s war, and peoples of all sorts and races, of every degree of power and variety of fortune, are involved in its sweeping processes of change and settlement.”

President Wilson has repeatedly taken the stand that all autocratic rule by a king or small group of men must end in every country as a necessary result of this war. It is well known that the Kaiser and his little group of army leaders educated, armed and trained Germany to conquer the world through forty

long years, and then deliberately set in motion the war machine they had created in the summer of 1914. Our President says as a necessary term of peace that all possibility of such a thing ever happening again must be removed by blotting out the cause. Among other results to be attained before there can be a peace, there is this remarkable statement, in a patriotic address at Mt. Vernon, July 4, 1918:

“The destruction of every arbitrary power anywhere that can separately, secretly and of its single choice disturb the peace of the world; or, if it cannot be presently destroyed, at the least, its reduction to virtual powerlessness.”

The above statements of terms are ample and cover all the points which may arise out of the war. There has been repeated and free discussion of them in this country and Europe, and Mr. Wilson himself has not lost an opportunity to explain their meaning in his own matchless way. There is now no doubt of their meaning or that the United States will struggle for them until they are facts. Yet out of them arises a big question as to the length of the war.

As early as February, 1918, Germany announced that she could accept the fourteen principles laid down by Wilson in the address of February 11. Many other times since Germany has intimated that she could accept the Wilson terms and was ready to open negotiations leading to peace. These hints have been many since the war turned for the Allies in the summer of 1918. Yet no negotiations have been entered

into up to the middle of October, 1918, as this is finished. Many may wonder why there was not peace when the enemy is ready to discuss with us our own announced terms. Wilson himself has answered on this point many times, most strikingly in his answer to the Pope's offer to make peace in August, 1917, and in the address of September 27, 1918. The following is quoted from the latter address:

"We are all agreed that there can be no peace obtained by any kind of bargain or compromise with the governments of Germany and her allies, because we have dealt with them already, and have seen them deal with Russia and Rumania. They have convinced us that they are without honor and do not intend justice. They observe no covenants, accept no principle but force and their own interest. We cannot 'come to terms' with them. They have made it impossible. The German people must by this time be fully aware that we cannot accept the word of those who forced this war upon us. We do not think the same thoughts or speak the same language of agreement.

"It is of capital importance that we should also be explicitly agreed that no peace shall be obtained by any kind of compromise or lessening of the principles which we have avowed as the principles for which we are fighting. There should exist no doubt about that."

Finally on October 12, 1918, Germany sent a message to President Wilson saying they were willing to accept all the terms he had laid down, and



asked that he take the matter up with the Allies and arrange with German representatives the terms of an armistice to stop the fighting while peace was being made. This has always been the regular procedure, and coming from any nation but Germany would have meant that the war was over. President Wilson immediately answered the proposal, and never has he spoken with greater power or clearness than when speaking straight to the arch-enemy for the first time since war started. If he had not established himself long ago as the champion spokesman for the liberty of mankind, this message would give him the place. The three main points are here given, but the writer has taken the liberty to add the numbers and put them in different order:

1. "The President's word just quoted (the extract from the Mt. Vernon speech quoted above) naturally constitutes a condition precedent to peace, if peace is to come by the action of the German people themselves. The President feels bound to say that the whole process of peace will, in his judgment, depend upon the definiteness and the satisfactory character of the guarantees which can be given in this fundamental matter."

2. "It must be clearly understood that the process of evacuation (of territory Germany had conquered) and the conditions of an armistice are matters which must be left to the judgment and advice of the military advisers of the United States and the allied governments, and the President feels it his duty to say that no arrangement can be accepted by the Government of the United States which does not provide

absolutely satisfactory safeguards and guarantees of the maintenance of the present military supremacy of the United States and the Allies on the field."

3. "The President also feels that it is his duty to add that neither the Government of the United States nor, he is quite sure, the governments associated with the United States, will consent to consider an armistice so long as the armed forces of Germany continue the illegal and inhumane practices which they still persist in."

It cannot be known surely what the outcome may be when this is being finished, but it is plain that President Wilson decreed the end of the Kaiser and his wicked system, demanded a surrender such that Germany could never make war again and in which she had no part in the arrangement, and served notice on them once for all that they must stop their hellish practices in the lands they held captive, inferring that punishment would be meted to them for what had already been done.

Whether they submit now or a month from now or a year from now the terms of peace are known, and they exist in the words of our own President Wilson. The end of the old German system is at hand, and the reign of peace in a world of freedom is just ahead. America and her brave Allies, at the price of the blood of their millions of young men, have put right and justice in a free and peaceful world as the rule by which nations must live in the future, and Woodrow Wilson has translated that ideal into burning words which will live forever.

### **An Estimate of Wilson as a Statesman.**

As Woodrow Wilson has already proven a tower of strength in the time of the world's greatest need, his opportunities for greatest service are just ahead. The whole world trusts him and looks to him in the final arrangements of world affairs at the end of the war. There is no doubt that he will measure up to this greatest opportunity ever accorded a human being to dispose of the destinies of all mankind. Undoubtedly he will be the head of the League of Nations which in the future is to take the place of all wars and insure justice to all peoples.

Woodrow Wilson is a product of America. No other country could have produced him. He is a Democrat—a product of democracy. Also he is America's first great contribution to the list of truly world statesmen. America's democracy has been called to the front in the breakdown of all the old systems together in the cataclysm of world war, and she offers a leader who embodies in his life the principle for which the world travails.

Lincoln was raised up by Almighty God to bring America through her great trial of internal strife to a new birth of freedom; just as truly He raised up Wilson to pilot America through her struggle with a foreign foe, and made him the leading exponent of the principles at stake. Such men appear at great stress periods. Let us be thankful.

A Kentucky poet, Cale Young Rice, has paid a touching tribute to Mr. Wilson, and there seems no more appropriate way to close this sketch and estimate of our beloved leader than to quote his little poem:



**To President Wilson.**

“Woodrow Wilson, master of patience,  
Master of silence, master of speech;  
Master amid the world’s war-frenzy  
Of clear wisdom’s inward reach;  
Watcher of raging civilizations  
Till the one righteous hour arrives  
When you can speak for all nations.  
Great is your guidance now that shrives  
Both friend and foe from base soul-gyves.

“Woodrow Wilson, lofty listener  
At the great heart of Destiny;  
Hearing above all feverous hatred  
Justice breathing what should be;  
Still for a peace that shall not perish  
Stand—for if ever a Providence  
Comes to the Universe to nourish  
Men in their woe, and lead them hence,  
Near us now is its Immanence!”









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